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The Week

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE is reaping the just reward for the early indecision which he showed in dealing with the difficult cases of Denby and Daugherty. He is the apparently helpless victim of a fight within his party which he might have forestalled but which once started he can scarcely control. It is the fighting spirit and the tough hide of his Attorney-General which have landed the President on this lonely and dreary island. He decided in the beginning to dispose of his two inconvenient secretaries, if possible, with their own consent rather than to bring down on himself the hostility which might result from their dismissal. At first it looked as if he would fail in both cases. Denby refused to budge and at the same time expressed fatuous self-satisfaction with his own performances. But in the end he was too decent a man to stay where he was not wanted. He made it easy for his chief by resigning while at the same time protesting against the injustice of his condemnation. But Mr. Daugherty is not so sensitive or so accommodating. He is the chief of the Department of Justice until he resigns or is dismissed, and he proposes, unlike Mr. Denby, to have justice done to himself even though the heavens fall. He passes on to Mr. Coolidge the burden of holding up the heavens. He is not making it easy for the President or for anybody else except the Democrats and the radicals.

IT looks now as if the President and his party were in for a pretty and a costly quarrel. We assume that the Attorney-General is a two-fisted fighter and will not voluntarily resign. We assume that Mr. Coolidge will not dismiss him unless facts are disclosed by the investigation into the Department of Justice which will compel decisive action. In the meantime the Republican party will stew in its own acid juice. The investigation will start and will unearth news about the way justice is dispensed by its custodians which will at least increase the demand for the head of the Attorney-General. Whether or not the evidence will justify his impeachment is doubtful, but it will certainly make it difficult for Mr. Coolidge to maintain his existing attitude of neutrality between Daugherty's friends and enemies. The President is, as Senator Borah has pointed out, precisely the one man in the country who is responsible for Daugherty. He is one of the few men in the country who are trying to shirk the responsibility either for standing by or for repudiating the Attorney-General. Of course in the end he will have to act and he can act only in one way. But apparently he will not act until the quarrel has done its utmost to damage his party and his own reputation for courage and political sagacity.

IN order to understand why the case of Daugherty occasions such sharp animosities and is by way of developing into such an acrimonious quarrel, one not entirely obvious fact must be kept in mind. Daugherty is not merely a bad actor with a tough hide; he has become a symbol of the kind of innocence or guilt which is characteristic of so much of resurrected post-war Republicanism. As we pointed out some weeks ago, there are a great many people connected with the Harding administration who are not guilty of indictable of-

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fences, but who are implicated in doubtful transactions or who have amiably looked the other way while such transactions were taking place. These people wish the investigation to be limited to a District Attorney's search for evidence to be used at a trial. They wish everybody who is not indictable to be considered innocent. They accuse the critics of orthodox Republicanism who wish the system which makes it easy for the Dohenys to be exposed, of "hysteria," of "libel," of "terrorism," of "political blackguardism," and the like. They have apparently decided to make their fight on Daugherty and to associate his immunity or his condemnation with the willingness of the Republican party to protect or to repudiate its own offspring. Such apparently is the attitude of the chairman of the Republican national committee, and it appeals to all the red-bloods and fighting blades in the party. Their opponents may well rejoice at their foolhardihood. If they wish to apotheosize Daugherty as a symbol of those things in the conduct of government for which Republicans should be willing, if necessary, to die in a ditch, their opponents have no reason to object. But how about Coolidge?

THE additional facts which have just come to light about the arrangement between Mr. McAdoo and Mr. Doheny cannot be very palatable to Mr. McAdoo's friends. The fee of $100,000 was superficially at worst an innocent and unfortunate impropriety, but the contingent fee of $900,000 could not conceivably be offered in return for legal services or diplomatic ability or for powers of persuasion or for the exercise of any of Mr. McAdoo's other distinguished talents. Just what Mr. Doheny hoped to get in return remains to be explained, but it looks as if it must have been something not unlike personal political influence. If this is true, Mr. McAdoo was converting his former public position—the prestige and the connections which he had acquired in public office—into a source of enormous private profit. This is the kind of behavior which a scrupulous man would not have adopted, and the American people have the right to insist in this respect on the most fastidious scrupulousness.

POINCARÉ remains the master, as indicated by the majority of 136 for his financial bill. We doubt that he is so very happy over the result. Defeat would have enabled him to retire while fighting manfully for financial stability. Victory puts his program to the test of experience. It is calculated to bring in 4,500,000,000 francs of additional revenue and to cut off an additional 3,000,000,000 in expenditures. Seven and a half billion is a large item, if the budget is in fact to profit by it. But after its recent performances French public bookkeeping does not inspire confidence. In calculating expenditures has the government taken into account the decline in the value of the franc, which will inflate the cost of everything the government has to buy? Has it taken into account the higher rate on refunding loans, and the imperative demands of the civil service for readjustment of compensation? We doubt it. Under the new financial law deficits will probably accumulate about as fast as they have been doing in the past years—exception made of the reconstruction deficits "recoverable from Germany."

PARIS forecasts of the report of the expert commission run true to type. The experts will find that in all essentials the French contentions as to Germany's ability to pay are justified. Germany has a magnificent industrial machine. She has the best railways in the world. The fall in the mark has wiped out all debts, private and public. Therefore the Germans even if charged with the present gold value of the indemnity under the London agreement, or $17,500,000,000, would be less burdened with debt than France, England or America. On these premises the recommendations of the committee, according to the forecasts, will include a bank under international control to provide a sound currency, a moratorium except for payments in kind, a big international loan secured by the railway system to enable the government to finance payments in kind, withdrawal of French control of the railways in the Ruhr and Rhineland and the abolition of the customs lines between occupied and unoccupied Germany. No attempt will be made to fix the total of the indemnity. That will remain, technically, where the London agreement put it.

SUCH forecasts are so obviously calculated to buoy up the franc and to strengthen the position of Poincaré that they are to be taken with a fair allowance of salt. Nevertheless there is nothing inherently improbable in them. General Dawes, who is far more distinguished for his bark than for his bite, would never think of signing a report unacceptable to France, and France will not be content with much less than the validation of all her main contentions. Besides, General Dawes is a business man, without any instinct for subtle political influences. A settlement which would simply require Germany to pay what she can until she can pay more looks reasonable to one who takes nothing but business considerations into account. The real weakness of such a settlement, that without German consent no loan can be raised on the railways, because no guarantee can be had of their profitable operation, would be dismissed by General Dawes with the all-sufficing expletive, "Hell and Maria." It is a fatal weakness, nevertheless. Such a report as the forecasts promise would leave the reparations tangle exactly where it is. German disorders and famine would continue, and

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the financial position of France would go from bad to worse.

IT is now plain that no bill fixing the surtax at Mr. Mellon's ideal of twenty-five percent can pass the House. Even thirty-five percent appears hopeless, but it might conceivably be put through if it were known that President Coolidge would sign a bill with a thirty-five percent maximum. Unless he yields so far—and the signs are that he will not—no revision will go through this year. We shall have a huge surplus of revenue, which could be applied advantageously to debt reduction. It could be so applied, but will it be? The bonus is to come to a vote, and with the plea of poverty excluded, it is difficult to see how it can be beaten in Congress. The President may veto it, but if he does he will present the Democrats with many hundreds of thousands of votes in the next election. If he has the acute sense of political values his admirers ascribe to him, he must now be cursing Mellon for getting him into a predicament from which he cannot extricate himself without grave loss.

DESIRABLE as an excess profits tax would be, we see no advantage in attaching it to the income tax bill now before the House, as Representative Frear tried to do in the amendment recently defeated. The subject of excess profits taxation is important enough to deserve separate discussion and a separate record vote. We suspect that it would not lose by so heavy a majority as 157 to 74, the vote on the amendment. In that vote were included those who did not wish to cumber the income tax law with a contentious matter not strictly germane, as well as those opposed to the excess profits tax on principle. It will be enough of an achievement if the House passes an income tax bill which thwarts the purpose of Secretary Mellon to make the main reductions in the category of the largest taxpayers. This at present seems assured.

THE increase in the estate tax rates carried in the House by a vote of 190 to 110 is a partial solution of the problem of tax revision through investment in exempt securities. No great estate of any kind can be handed down through the generations with taxes running as high as forty percent of each succession. The objection to heavy federal inheritance taxes most frequently raised—that they rob the states of an important source of revenue—is met by the provision that deduction may be made for state taxes up to twenty-five percent. There is another objection, that estate taxes are taxes of capital, not on capital, and operate to convert the productive resources of a country into current income. We should like the amendment better if it had provided that all the proceeds of the tax should be applied to debt reduction, over and above any sinking fund provisions. Under our present management of the public debt, however, surpluses are normally used to retire part of the debt. So it comes to the same in the end, if the revenues are kept sufficiently large to yield a surplus equivalent to the estate taxes.

MR. MACDONALD'S Labor government seems to be in for a fairly long term of office, in spite of a rather hectic week in which it received, alternately, the opposition of the Conservatives, of the Liberals and of not a few members of its own ranks. Perhaps the most genuine and violent, if at times suppressed disagreement, came from the latter, who, brought up in the party's lifelong antimilitarist beliefs, had difficulty in swallowing the plans for continued expansion of air craft and the decision to build new cruisers and destroyers. Even though the additional battleships were announced as replacements, there was great indignation in the House, not only among the Liberals, but on the part of Laborites, a good many of whom refused to vote at all, and were perhaps prevented from voting adversely only by the exercise of a more severe discipline than appears on the surface.

IF Mr. MacDonald goes on splitting downright enemies, liberal sympathizers and enrolled followers into such a patchwork of support and opposition at different times, his government may survive a good many months. It has survived two strikes which passed off, though not particularly well, at least better than might have been expected. It has survived some glaring compromises in matters about which Labor's opinion, when out of office, seemed to be clear. It has survived the most violent protests by the Conservatives on the new Rents bill. It has survived whole hearted Liberal disagreement on a number of points. But it has managed luckily, if not altogether admirably, to shoot not more than one of these various rapids at the same time.

WE are glad to see that the Provincetown Players, who have begun so brilliantly with their productions of the Spook Sonata and Fashion, are to get more money and more room. Their directors have planned to take over the Greenwich Village Theatre and raise an initial stock subscription to the amount of $20,000, of which a quarter has already been pledged. Fashion will probably mark the opening of their new quarters, and nothing could be happier than to begin performances which a reasonably large fraction of the play-going public could attend, as with this foolishly gay and delightful revival. This beginning is expected to develop into repertory, which will include from time to time plays which fail on Broadway through faults in the public rather than in themselves. Good luck attend what its backers call their "risk in art."

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THE protest of the New York Democratic Congressmen against the quota provisions of the Johnson immigration bill is forcible and cogent. The bill does in fact discriminate heavily against the countries from which the new immigration comes. Of that there is no question. It discriminates ostensibly for the purpose of insuring more complete assimilation. But there is no satisfactory evidence that Italians, Serbs, Czecho-Slovaks, Poles and Russians, against whom discrimination operates, are any more reluctant to assume the duties of citizenship than the immigrants from northwestern Europe were when they were new in the country. In fact, the second generation stock from these newer immigrants is on the whole more likely to be completely Americanized than was the second generation of the Germans and Scandinavians of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The later immigrants settle in the cities, where the forces of assimilation work most effectively. The real ground for the proposed racial discrimination is the assumption that the immigrants from eastern and southern Europe are morally and intellectually inferior to the northwestern European stock. This assumption is supported only by the results of some very partial statistics of the "socially inadequate" classes and by the army intelligence tests. Not even the intelligence testers, however, would claim that their technique has reached such perfection that "native intelligence"—if there is such a thing—can be wholly isolated from environmental influence. Nordic stock would probably test low in Italy, as Italian stock does here. For all that, both Nordics and Italians have a lot of good in them.

The Uses of Politics

A FEW weeks ago a prominent Stock Market operator, Mr. Jesse L. Livermore, used a sharp decline in the prices of speculative securities as a sufficient excuse for a bitter attack on government by politicians. In his opinion cheap and nasty politics are by way of ruining the business of the country. Investigations and agitations for purely political purposes had undermined both the confidence of business men in the future and the confidence of the public in the conduct of business and government. He predicted as the inevitable and disastrous result of this frivolity a diminished volume of business, lower prices, unemployment, more agitation and discontent and finally a catastrophe. He ended by pleading for the operation of the government by men of proved ability with a business experience and point of view who would be paid salaries as large as those bestowed on the chiefs of large private corporations. From the point of view of Mr. Livermore the government which Mr. Andrew Mellon has furnished to his fellow countrymen as Secretary of the Treasury is in every respect except its rarity a model of perfection.

This romantic vision of the perfect commonwealth and of the normal relation between politics and business would not deserve comment were it not for one sinister fact. American business men of large responsibilities are repeating with minor variations Mr. Livermore's complaints and extolling his remedies. Apparently they consider politics the malicious enemy and the inconsiderate destroyer of those business activities on which society depends for the satisfaction of its wants. Their state of mind is coming to be analogous to that of the young patriots who in Italy organized Fascism and set up Mussolini to kill the dragon of sterile and frivolous parliamentary politics. They insist on the need of government by business. No doubt most of them are genuinely disgusted by the spectacle of corruption such as that of Mr. Fall, but they quickly pass over that aspect of the matter and charge it up to political rather than to business morals. They are far more interested and distressed about the extent to which political agitators have on the strength of the exposures broadcasted suspicions about the general dependability of Republican government and about its relation to big business. Their attention is fastened, not upon the evils and offences which politics has both committed and exposed but on the injustices and melodrama which the exposures have occasioned. They resent fiercely the indiscriminate diatribes and the aggressive unfairness of certain of the more radical senators, and this resentment shuts their eyes to the meaning and the probable consequences of the present political commotion in Washington. They are blind to the tendency of their own conduct and attitude to increase the suspicion, the uncertainty and the hostility which they deplore.

As a matter of fact business men like Mr. Livermore who talk about politics and its relation to business betray an ignorance of political realities and an indifference to them which makes the alleged ignorance and indifference of politicians with respect to business look like consummate attention and knowledge. Politics as it is regularly practised in America is parasitical on business and is the accomplice of it. Professional politicians exist chiefly to run political machines which will serve the purposes of business. Of course they sometimes blackmail their employer or pilfer at his expense, but business of all kinds, including politics as it is now conducted, implies some pilfering by unscrupulous practitioners. As compared to the real enemy of big business which is adverse class economic agitation, the politics which so many business men despise and deplore is positively salutary. It provides them with their most effective defence and shelter. At the bottom of their hearts most business men realize this fact. That is why, although so many of them curse the politicians during fifty-one weeks of the year, they usually on election day vote as

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regularly as do the politicians themselves. They have come to need their political parasite quite as much as the parasite needs them.

Business men should for their own benefit consider carefully the service which American politics has rendered to them. In a rapidly changing industrial and agrarian society which is also a self-governing democracy, the chief function of practical politics is to act as a shock-absorber. The several sections and classes in a fluid community of this kind are constantly expanding or contracting as compared with other sections and classes. These shifts in the distribution of power and prosperity inevitably create suffering, discontent, resistance, and agitation on the part of the less prosperous classes or sections and self-satisfaction, buoyancy and a sense of patriotic righteousness on the part of the more prosperous. It is the office of politics to lubricate these conflicts between ascending and declining classes and sections—to prevent the agitation from getting out of hand—to keep the economically discontented house-broken. In the highest sense of the word politics is equivalent to statesmanship. It seeks to rise above the conflict, remove the grievances and to restore a more wholesome balance of power among the classes. But even in the lowest sense of party squabbles and expediencies politics provides an indispensable net in which class or sectional pugnacity and violence are caught, entangled and sometimes extinguished.

The American party system is the most effective institution which has ever been worked out to distract and fatigue subversive economic discontent and agitation. The Republican and Democratic parties have between them during the last fifty years absorbed and neutralized a huge amount of economic and sectional discontent and dislocation. They have enabled the people who have profited most from the prevailing economic change of that period which is the enormous growth of centralized industry and finance, to weather the hostile political attacks without suffering any substantial diminution of their privileges and opportunities. Instead of denouncing the irrelevance and the irresponsibility of politics, the men who profit from the existing operation of big business should be deeply grateful for the services of the politicians. It is not too much to say that they have hitherto saved business from the consequences of its own excesses and mistakes.

But business men should not expect the impossible. The American political mechanism is supposed to be democratic. Business-like as it is in spirit, it operates according to rules different from those which prevail in the autocracy of private business. Politicians can distract, confuse and manipulate public opinion, but they cannot ignore it. When public opinion is agitated, they must yield to the agitation. If they did not yield, they would be shattered by the shock instead of absorbing it. At present the politicians are not yielding to the "trouble-makers" any more than they can help. The great majority of the Republicans and many of the Democrats are only too anxious to shut down on the investigation, to avoid further exposures and to behave as if the oil scandal was merely a capricious whiff of unpleasantness in a world of sunshine and happiness. But what can they do? A presidential election is imminent. They obtain their power not from the ownership of huge machines or the control of credit but from votes. They have to satisfy an agitated and suspicious electorate by pursuing the investigation. They have to pretend that they would like to get rid of the Denbys and the Daughertys even though they believe, like Senator Pepper, that Daugherty's only real offence is unpopularity. If they assumed any other attitude, public suspicion and agitation would increase enormously in volume and in violence. These necessary concessions prevent them for the moment from placing effective obstacles in the way of a continuation of the investigation and of the exposures. The Public Lands Committee can adjourn for a week. It can hold a few secret sessions. But it cannot quit. From the political point of view it would be madness to talk about quitting or to behave as if they were concealing anything about the private business life of public men or about the political relationships of business men which the public considers itself entitled to know.

Business men will, consequently, do well not to get impatient with the politicians. The latter necessarily play the game under their own rules. They must do something to allay public suspicion before they can absorb the public agitation. The method which they are adopting may not in this case succeed very well. The scandal may grow as the result of exposure, and the agitation may temporarily become too violent for automatic absorption. But from the point of view of the permanent welfare of business it is much better for the politicians to ride on the tide rather than to oppose it. They can be trusted to set up an effective opposition as soon as they dare. In reflecting on their own predicament business men should remember that some of their number have made it extremely difficult for the political machinery of adjustment to work with its customary smoothness. If the Republican administration had been less accommodating, if it had not been so extremely anxious "to make it easy" for the Dohenys, and if the Dohenys and Sinclairs had not been so extremely greedy, there would not have been so much occasion for public suspicion and reprobation, and the mechanism of absorption would not be subjected to such a severe strain. Distressing, consequently, as politics is for business, the tension and its inconveniences are not the fault of politics. Business is getting the kind of politics which it deserves. Unless it wakes up, realizes the infirmities of its own position, and refrains from handing to the

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politicians such terrific shocks to absorb, it will call down on its head a political hurricane which will make the existing commotion in Washington look like an April shower. In that case even the parasite of politics might cease to be a parasite and be transformed by a morbid compulsion into a malignant growth.

Prices and Taxes

THE first chapter in the story of tax revision at Washington has come to an end when Congress defeated in a most decisive manner the proposal to reduce the maximum surtax rates to twenty-five percent. Twenty-eight Republican members of the House refused to vote for Secretary Mellon's proposal. Eleven of these did not vote at all, while seventeen "radical" Republicans voted with the Democrats. It is hard for the leaders of the majority in the House to swallow such a humiliating defeat, so they are revising their strategy. The latest plan calls for a veto by President Coolidge. This would block all tax reduction before election. It would throw the responsibility for failure to reduce upon those who voted for the Garner bill; and it would carry the whole tax issue before the people at the next election.

The observing bystanders have their doubts about this glib way of fixing responsibility for the maintenance of high taxes upon the Democrats and these insubordinate Republicans. Be that as it may, it would probably be the best thing for the country if taxation should become a leading issue in the next election. That would give time for a survey of our financial situation and the formulation of a fiscal program for the United States of America over the next four years at least. The lack of a fiscal program was responsible for the presentation of such a half-baked measure as the Mellon plan.

The argument for the reduction of the surtaxes was based upon reasoning which could not stand the test of analysis. The decrease of large incomes in the depression year of 1921 was so obviously due to reasons other than the high surtax rates as to make the Treasury's argument on the point ridiculous. The prominence given to tax-exempt securities was entirely contrary to the facts as they appeared from all the Treasury statistics available. Neither the Secretary of the Treasury nor anyone else knew the number of large incomes which had been reported during 1923, the only year in which the fifty percent rate was effective. In short, the Treasury made out a poor case, both in fact and in logic, for its position on the surtax reduction. It was inevitable that this should be pointed out, both in and out of Congress. There were those who would not bend the knee, but who insisted on telling the plain truth about the shortcomings of the Treasury's case.

When the public supporters of the proposal brought forth their arguments, they presented an array of fallacies seldom excelled in American history. The theory that taxes never rest upon the person who pays them, but are shifted to someone else in the form of higher prices, higher wages, higher rents and interest rates, was put forth in its most naïve form. The Secretary of the Treasury asserted dogmatically that "no thoughtful person longer doubts that, irrespective of his income, he pays the high surtaxes in the general high price level."

Roger Babson, in a signed article, imparted to the American public the amazing information that the wheat farmer added the tax which he paid to the cost of wheat, and recovered it in the price which he received. The final step in the demonstration came in President Coolidge's Lincoln Day address, when he followed the course of a steer from the time it left the farm until its hide returned to the farm as a pair of shoes. As our President sees the thing, the unfortunate farmer had to pay for these shoes a price increased by a due proportion of all the taxes paid by all the intermediate distributors and producers who had handled the steer and its hide. Said the President, "If the farmer ultimately wears the shoes he pays everybody's taxes from the farm to his feet." Despite the fact that the farmer, according to this theory, had originally added his tax to the price of the steer, the whole bundle of taxes is passed back into his arms when he buys products.

All this is certainly the most arrant nonsense. It is none the less nonsense that the press of the country has supported it almost universally. But this final demonstration in the President's speech was too much for a few of our best journals. One of them remarks editorially that there are at least two puzzles left for solution to believers in this theory of accumulatedly shiftable system of taxes.

(1) Why does anybody except the farmer complain of his taxes if he can always meet them by making corresponding additions to the sales prices of his goods?

(2) How is it possible under a graduated system of general income taxation for business competitors of unequal incomes to transfer their unequal tax burdens to their customers and still continue to compete with one another?

This puts the whole matter succinctly. The very fact that those who pay the high surtaxes complain so bitterly about them and work so vigorously for their reduction is the best proof that they were borne by the people who paid them, and were not shifted to anyone else. The press did the Mellon plan great damage by insisting that the reduction of the surtax was really a device for increasing the collection from these people. Of all taxes, those upon income are the most likely to remain ultimately upon the people upon whom they are assessed. It is clear, too, that producers of commodities who compete with each other, must

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sell at the same price irrespective of the taxes which they pay. Income taxes bear in quite different manner upon competitors. Some of them pay high income taxes, while others pay none. Among these very producers of leather and leather products who worked the steer hide over into shoes, there were in 1921, 1,213 who suffered a deficit of $106,000,000. There were 439 others who made a net income of $53,000,000. This constituted almost seventeen percent upon their invested capital; they paid more than one-fifth of this to the federal government in taxes. The group that suffered deficits paid no taxes whatever, for it had no income. It is clear that all of these concerns must have sold products at the same price. One does not get his shoes at a reduced price by buying them from producers that make no profits and therefore pay no taxes.

But most of this argument by the advocates of surtax reduction concerning the effect of taxes upon prices has no application to those who are immediately engaged in producing goods. The great mass of our productive industry is carried on under the corporate form. The number of individual producers who pay the high surtax rates is negligible. Recipients of large incomes derive them from dividends, interest, and speculative profits. To assume that corporations will this year figure into their operating costs the taxes which their stockholders will pay next year on dividends received out of profits which will not be known or determined for another twelve months is rather too ridiculous to need serious consideration. Still more ludicrous is it to insist that the speculative profits which the stockholder makes by selling his stock at an advance have anything whatever to do with the operating expenses of the corporation or with the prices which it receives for its products. It is an old adage that vaulting ambition is likely to overleap itself. Certainly it has done so this time.

It is desirable that the administrative measures intended to prevent avoidance of taxes should be revised and improved. Secretary Mellon has recommended some excellent changes of this sort. Had Mr. William Rockefeller been obliged to deduct the interest on the $30,000,000 which he owed at the time of his death from the interest which he received on his $44,000,000 of tax-exempt securities, they would have helped him little in the avoidance of taxes. As the law stands he is allowed to deduct it from his taxable income. There are other administrative measures which would greatly lessen the legal avoidance of taxes to which the recipients of large incomes now resort. Professor Thomas S. Adams, the able adviser of the Treasury during our trying periods of war finance, has made this clear in his letter to Chairman Green of the Ways and Means Committee.

The proponents of the Mellon plan overleaped themselves, too, in their insistence upon the oppressive effects of our present rates upon industry. We have completed a year of productive activity, profits, and prosperity, seldom equalled in our history. Are we to take seriously these lugubrious assertions concerning the effects of the high surtax rates? If by a process of self-hypnosis we had deluded ourselves into the belief that disaster was impending, we would receive a sharp awakening by the statement that "business the country over is regarded by President Coolidge to be in a healthy condition, and for a long period ahead there is no present indication of a change, except for the better." The Cabinet members had reported to President Coolidge that "there did not seem to be any unemployment anywhere." We are relieved to know it. The country had suspected it all along, and had doubted the assertion that the high surtax rates were ruining business. Evidently these assertions had not fooled enough people in Congress or out of it to make possible a reduction of surtaxes to twenty-five percent.

The Passing of the Freeman

IN any important sense of the word the Freeman did not fail at all. It carried on through four perplexing years, satisfying the intellectual needs and clarifying the political views of thousands of readers. So a book appears, is read and digested by those whose minds are prepared for it, and finally takes its place high on the bookseller's shelves or disappears from them entirely. Its contribution to thought very likely loses its identity, yet it may count heavily in later years. On its constant readers—and few periodicals ever had more loyal ones—the Freeman exerted an influence that will not die. This is success. It is through such successes that a nation's cultural wealth is slowly accumulated.

Only in the vulgar meaning of the term was the Freeman a failure. It did not draw to itself from the public the requisite number of dollars. We do not know precisely how many subscribers would have been needed to insure the continuous existence of the Freeman, but we should guess fifty thousand. That is a small number, in a population of one hundred and ten million. Intelligence was the outstanding characteristic of the Freeman. The critics of democracy would say that this fact put the Freeman beyond the reach of the majority. But at least five million Americans would stand up well in the intelligence tests. The Freeman needed the support of only one out of a hundred in this select minority. That this support was not forthcoming throws light both upon the quality of the Freeman and upon the quality of the American mind.

There was nothing uncertain or vacillating in the fundamental doctrine of the Freeman. It was "radical" in its own peculiar sense of radicalism.

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The conservative is content with the state as it is. The liberal would reform it, either, as with the old school of the 1850's, by restricting its functions and giving free play to individual initiative, or, as with the progressive liberals of today, by applying the powers of the state to the protection of the weak against the strong. The Freeman "radical" repudiates the state and all its works. The state originated in the efforts of conquerors to consolidate their control over the vanquished. According to Albert Jay Nock's argument in his series of signed articles published last summer, the state has always remained an instrument of exploitation in the hands of groups alien in social status, if not in blood, to the great mass of the people. This, the Freeman believed, is the essential nature of the state, and there is no use in trying to make anything else out of it. The state must go, not by violent revolution, but by the development of ideas that will leave the state high and dry among the useless debris of forgotten ages.

These views are, indeed, far from those held by the New Republic. We do believe, however, that altogether too much is commonly expected from the state. Politics, in our view, is an instrument of progress, but the main current of progress does not flow through political channels. Much more important are the unconscious processes of adjustment of the individual to social needs and of society to individual needs; the educational process, taken as a whole; the conquest of new knowledge; the evolution of the unwilling, suspicious, half servile laborer into the free coöperator. So important do these non-political forces seem to us that we welcomed the presence of an organ of opinion so intent upon them that it could see only gray in matters of politics.

There must be hundreds of thousands of Americans who are thoroughly disillusioned with politics and who stand much nearer to the Freeman than we do. Why did they not come to its support? Chiefly because disillusionment is of all kinds of like-mindedness the weakest in cohesive force. If one believes ardently in a certain idea, it is a great comfort to encounter a fellow human being who also believes in it. If one is sceptical as to the value of an idea there is small profit in meeting another sceptic. "I'll not have to go to the market for an imprecation," says a character in Latin comedy. "That is a commodity of which I have plenty at home." Week by week the Freeman used to present us with current comment on political affairs in the tone indicated by the following: "The political comedy has been considerably enlivened—" "The article . . dealt with the squabble—" "This strikes us, by comparison with the insufferable and afflictive tosh—." Unfortunately those who really like such comment have plenty of the commodity at home. They do not have to buy it.

What confirms the politically disillusioned in their reluctance to support an organ which expresses their own way of thinking is that curious current dogma of the inferiority of "destructive" to "constructive" criticism. One may in his heart damn politics and the state to utter annihilation, yet he feels that this is a weakness on his part. It has been drilled into us that we must not destroy anything until we know what we can put in its place. There is extant the report of a German colonial administrator who warned the home government against attempting to stamp out cannibalism until the appropriate constructive equivalent for it should be invented. To destroy error, to remove an incubus, have come to pass with us as only half-services. We often hear the surgeon's calling disparaged because surgery constructs nothing. The surgeon removes a cancer, indeed, but what does he put in its place?

This "constructive" superstition has somehow fastened itself on all of us. It worked powerfully to restrict the circulation of the Freeman, because the attitude of the Freeman toward politics was essentially destructive. It was destructive with a constructive purpose, to be sure. The Freeman belittled political achievements in order to direct attention upon other things. But unfortunately it gave politics the first place in the book, and a generous share of its space. In so doing it allowed itself to be thought of as a political journal whose position was anti-political. It is easy, after the event, to see that the Freeman should have put its excellent material on literature, art, and philosophy at the top of the basket and its little sour political berries at the bottom. "Radicalism" of the Freeman brand is not a political staple like the radicalism of the Liberator or the liberalism or conservatism of most other periodicals. It is properly a relish to go with plenty of non-political meat.

In the journalistic world it is no miracle to rise from the dead. We hope that the Freeman may rise again, with a gain of wisdom from its sojourn among the shadows, to be greeted by a wider circle of readers, also increased in wisdom with the fated passing of the "constructive" superstition. Such wit and vigor and lucidity as the Freeman exhibited ought not to perish out of America.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Conscience and the Bishops:
A Historic Step

THE House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in an evening and a morning of last November created a new situation in that communion, not bringing order out of chaos, but something very like chaos out of what had been order. It was not fortunate that by an act so rapid and so slightly considered so profound an upheaval should have been occasioned; but since it was so, it would not be expedient to rest the matter until the question at issue has for practical purposes been settled. The question is of the right of individual clergymen to interpret certain articles of the creed in a symbolic, not a literal sense. And it would be neither expedient or honorable to rest the matter until it has been made clear to the public that the bishops' implied charge of dishonesty against some of their own number and many others is without basis. By that accusation (which had they paused to look into the state of opinion and into recent history and ecclesiastical rulings could hardly have been made) against some of the most respected men in the church, they secured a prompt and formidable revolt. As the matter stands at present, their act has in the short interval had results out of which has emerged a more incontestable basis for the liberties they condemned than has ever existed before. It is of capital importance that this result shall not be reversed.

The church is a deep-seated organ of society, powerful for good. It is the institute of the inner life, which is by nature weaker than the outer life and yet has the ultimate control over it. So long as man has an inner life, requiring to be developed, steadied and guided, there will be need of the church. It demands the best mind and soul of the community to lead it. Today there are crying tasks for moral influence and leadership (in no little part unnoted) which belong to its function and which it should perform. It is not forever limited to its present scope. Society should not encourage it to bar out the more enlightened and alert young spirits. Yet society is prone to forget its own stake in the matter, look on indifferently and merely say: "Every man has a right to his opinion, but if he doesn't believe what the church says he should go out of it." This is sound sense and truth, but it does not carry the conclusion fancied. The question is, What does the church really say? That is, what does it mean, or permit us to mean, by the words it uses? While historic and venerable words are retained, full of true symbolic force and fitness and holding the church in spirit together through the ages, is it forbidden that the mind and meaning behind them should grow in depth and enlightenment? That is what is being decided now and it is in the interest of society that it should be decided for the largest benefit.

It is a point that has to be decided. In any oath, vow or test the question may be raised, What do these words mean? And there is only one authority that can answer, the authority that imposes the oath, vow or test. If the church permits certain words of the creed to be accepted in a figurative or symbolic sense it is not dishonest to say them in that sense. If it refuses to permit this it will be dishonest. For that will not be within *the meaning of the words* as officially employed.

Religion involves worship, and this is an action in which many of the intellectual class have no desire to engage. "Only by bowing down before the higher," said Carlyle, "does man feel himself exalted." Those who do desire to engage in it know that the spirit of worship cannot express itself and give the measure of its depth without potent symbolism. When the worship is just, such symbolism is expressive of truth. Christianity is not the mere devotion to a principle but to a person as embodying that principle. Christ, by his principle of love and benefit, which he declared to be the one basis of the whole moral law, and by the identification of his whole personality, acts, teaching, death and spirit with the principle, becomes an object of the Christian's personal worship as an embodiment of the divine. There is no truer or higher object of worship. The historic dogmas that have gathered about him have this in common, that their purpose is to exalt and magnify Jesus Christ. To say in the creed that he was "conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary," that he was the Son of God and also of man, is, for many of us, to use a historic and poetic symbol to express the truth that while he had all the nature of the children of men he was divine in nature in that he was peculiarly one with the spirit of God.

Long ago at a university I had unexpectedly to take an oath. The dean placed a paper with the form of words before me. In doubt whether I could sincerely use certain expressions I asked him what they meant. He gave them a broad and non-literal interpretation; to this I could subscribe and I took the oath. It was he who asked me to take it, he stood by to represent the imposing power, and it would have been idle and absurd to insist upon taking the language in a narrower sense when he authorized a wider one. The case is typical. When the meaning of the creed is in question the church alone can decide, the present

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church, for it is the present church that imposes it as a test and could cease to impose it. If instead I had at first said to the dean, "There is one sense in which I can say these words and I shall take the oath in that sense," and he had heard without demur, the case would have been precisely the same. The question of veracity depends wholly on the question, What are the permitted meanings? No one wishes to forbid the literal interpretation; the wish is that the non-literal shall be permitted also. Anyone who looks at history and the growth of a social organism will see that there is only one way in which wider meanings can begin to be permitted, namely by precedent; by the initiative of individuals, who find a larger sense possible for the words and let it be known that they take them in that sense. If the corporate church forbids this, or deems it ground for ejection from the ministry, the matter is settled—for the time at least. If the corporate church, knowing, does not condemn, it leaves the precedent standing; it is permitting the new interpretation. And when this fact is sufficiently clear others are entitled to regard the meaning as permitted. Individuals by their initiative are not merely deciding for themselves, they are playing a legitimate part toward forming the attitude of the church. Such growth and enlargement cannot be effected in the first instance by formal action of the whole church, for new interpretations must exist within the body before it is called upon to judge of them. It is in this respect properly a slow-moving body; it does not make up its mind quickly, having a wide range of mind to make up. Much consideration, warning experience, balancing of opposite forces, intellectual sympathy, charity, caution may go to the making of the church's ultimate will with regard to such a precedent.

The frequent indifference of society toward the individual who is fighting its battles within the ancient organization is seen not least in those who only too cordially agree with him in the negative or questioning part of his opinions; and this for the reason that they have little interest in the constructive and coöperative part. Their only aid is the casual advice to come and join them outside. It is therefore worth while to quote from John Stuart Mill, whom the late Lord Morley called "the wisest and most virtuous man whom I have ever known or am likely to know," some words uttered in the Inaugural address which he delivered as Rector to the students of St. Andrew's University:

> Those of you who are destined for the clerical profession are, no doubt, so far held to a certain number of doctrines, that, if they ceased to believe them, they would not be justified in remaining in a position in which they would be required to teach insincerely. But use your influence to make those doctrines as few as possible. It is not right that men should be bribed to hold out against conviction—to shut their ears against objections, or, if the objections penetrate, to continue professing full and unfaltering belief when their confidence is already shaken. Neither is it right that, if men honestly profess to have changed some of their religious opinions, their honesty should as a matter of course exclude them from taking a part, for which they may be admirably qualified, in the spiritual instruction of the nation. The tendency of the age, on both sides of the ancient Border, is towards the relaxation of formularies, and a less rigid construction of articles. This very circumstance, by making the limits of orthodoxy less definite, and obliging everyone to draw the line for himself, is an embarrassment to consciences. But I hold entirely with those clergymen who elect to remain in the national church, so long as they are able to accept its articles and confessions in any sense or with any interpretation consistent with common honesty, whether it be the generally received interpretation or not. If all were to desert the church who put a large and liberal construction on its terms of communion, or who would wish to see those terms widened, the national provision for religious teaching and worship would be left utterly to those who take the narrowest, the most literal, and purely textual view of the formularies; who, though by no means necessarily bigots, are under the great disadvantage of having bigots for their allies, and who, however great their merits may be,—and they are often very great,—yet, if the church is improvable, are not the most likely persons to improve it. Therefore, if it were not an impertinence in me to tender advice in such a matter, I should say, let all who conscientiously can, remain in the church. A church is far more easily improved from within than from without. Almost all the illustrious reformers of religion began by being clergymen; but they did not think that their profession as clergymen was inconsistent with being reformers. They mostly indeed ended their days outside the churches in which they were born; but it was because the churches, in an evil hour for themselves, cast them out. They did not think it any business of theirs to withdraw. They thought they had a better right to remain in the fold, than those had who expelled them.

Apparently such members of the House of Bishops as voted on this matter in November did not hold that in these matters the church must act with cautious deliberation, on pain of discovering that it had not been the church that was acting but only an insufficiently informed portion of it. Summarily to condemn the precedents that had established freer interpretation was what they undertook. The House is for the most part a cautious, conciliatory, kindly body, for the individual bishops usually possess these qualities. But on this occasion it adopted and issued as a Pastoral Letter the report of a small committee which by implication finds well-known bishops, hundreds of the clergy, and thousands of the laity guilty of a position regarding the creeds inconsistent with "honesty in the use of language." In the same connection are used the words "dishonesty and unreality." The example given is the interpreting of the words "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary" in any other than the literal sense. "For holding and teaching" such an interpretation "a clergyman is liable to be presented

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for trial." The subject had not been announced in the call for the meeting as coming up for action or discussion and many bishops were absent. It is credibly reported that some who were present were taken unawares and did not vote. The Letter was in response to a petition addressed to the House by Senator Pepper of Pennsylvania and other laymen asking some definite pronouncement on the too free interpretations of doctrine in certain quarters. The report was adopted unanimously.

A Pastoral Letter is merely a species of sermon addressed to the whole church; it has no binding authority. Only the decision of General Convention or of a court of final appeal created by General Convention could have that. None the less the action created instantly a new moral situation. So long as any fair-minded inquirer who asked himself, To what are the Episcopal clergy really committed? would find the true state of things and therein find the liberty that precedents had secured, the situation was tolerable. But when he would find these precedents declared null and void by a body so widely representative and so near the seat of legislative and judicial power this situation was gravely compromised. The wider interpretations had not yet by authority been forbidden but they had suffered a weighty challenge; they had become doubtful. The precedents must be reëstablished; that is, they must be renewed in no uncertain manner and must remain uncondemned by any final authority. Any other course would have permitted the church to lock itself in a dark room and throw the key out of the window. Accordingly, numerous clergymen since the Pastoral Letter have been engaged in renewing the precedents. The Modern Churchman's Union and the faculty of the Episcopal Theological school of Cambridge, affiliated with Harvard, have issued protests. The rectors of the most prominent parishes, with few exceptions, in the largest city of the country have either by word or act expressed their disapproval. Not widespread controversy only but still more widespread acute disturbance of private minds and feelings among devoted members of the church on both sides has ensued. The bishops had unwittingly thrown a torch into a somewhat inflammable building.

The question was now whether they would carry their opinion into action and bring non-literalists to trial. Almost immediately afterward the Rev. Lee W. Heaton in the diocese of Dallas, Texas, where the bishops' meeting had been held, was presented for trial. The Bishop Coadjutor of Texas announced however that, while the presentment was warranted, "as similar interpretations of the doctrine in question are held, taught and preached" by bishops, he was unwilling to consent to the trial, and waited until higher authority should point out the course of wisdom and justice. That is, Bishop Moore desisted on precisely what appeared above to be the natural ground, that the opinion was already too well intrenched in the church. The effect of the course he has taken is that the freer interpretation in his diocese is permitted; by an act whose deliberate and responsible character is notably enhanced by its coming directly after the bishops' pronouncement and under the aroused attention of the whole church. Unless Dr. Lawrence or other bishops or priests are now not only proceeded against but condemned for their stand on the same doctrine, which is hardly likely, Bishop Moore's action, taken with what preceded it, remains a definitive and historic step.

To leave the subject here would be to leave a vital half of it unstated. What appears to be the public's impression of the whole matter is a caricature. This is not a simple struggle between modernists and conservatives, in which one party should conquer. To be sure the charge of dishonesty must be repelled and the poisonous suspicion of it removed by the light of day. For the rest, what is needed is not a triumph but a synthesis. The bishops in their instinct are right, though in their method wrong. They are springing to the defence of something vital. That something is the personal worship of Jesus Christ as an eternal presence, a being having not only goodness but power, a potent saviour. They regard this as essential to the faith and as imperilled by "modernism," and they are right.

Incidentally, be it said that it is by no means only "broad-churchmen" who take certain clauses of the creed in a non-literal sense. Many catholics or "high churchmen," including some identified with the extreme and strictest school, do so too; while fully retaining their descent from "liberal protestantism."

Modernism! What an ominous party-name! An idea is not sound because it is modern. Not a few modern ideas and tendencies are bad and noxious. We should not be in quest of whatsoever things are modern but of what is true. If we are captivated by the fashions of thought of our own time one thing is tolerably certain, that we shall appear antiquated to succeeding ages. Modernism is provincialism in the realm of time. It is reasonable-ism, true-ism that should be our only concern. To say "The spirit of the age has changed; we moderns can't believe that sort of thing any more" is to trust to one of the most treacherous of guides, a contagious and prevailing mood or habit of mind. Education should enable a man to reach out beyond the currents and eddies of opinion in which he lives and lay hold of something firm and unshaken, of principles of sound evidence, of those tests of truth that have nothing to do with fashion. An age gains no more than an individual from conceit of its ideas, and would do well to escape so far as it can from itself, its current impulses and easy assumptions, into a larger world, to detect its own blindnesses and learn how to cure them. Yet an age is no more disposed to do this than an individual.

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The progress of the church's mind does not consist in discarding old Christianity or parts of it and substituting new ideas. Its business is not to adopt modern thoughts as patches on an old and ragged garment. Christianity has a logical development from within itself. The more conservative it is the more progressive it must be, if its conservatism is genuine, for it is conservative of a progressive thing. It is perpetually preaching "newness of life." A gospel of love is a gospel of ever-better service and therefore of ever-better intelligence. You cannot serve effectually without understanding your task, your beneficiary and his situation in the real world. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." There is no strife between realism and idealism, for you must know the world as it is to make it what it should be. Precisely in the interest of the service for which it exists the church must seek light from every quarter, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." Its maxim must be: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." I repeat, this comes out of its gospel and is not merely thrust upon it by modern enlightenment. In other words, the principle develops out of its gospel that it should take the fullest advantage of modern enlightenment.

The church is conservative because what it has to preserve is precious. It has to preserve religion. Its business is not to formulate a correct philosophical analysis but to reveal such aspects of reality as speak to the will and the mood, create impulse, transform life and satisfy or overwhelm contemplation. Christian religion is not merely ethics, else it could not be a powerful reinforcement to ethics. It is the worship of a person embodying a principle. It understands the secret of the heart and loves the principle in the person. We see the men and women of today; we cannot see Christ with our literal eyes; but the mind's eye seeks to perceive him across the centuries as a living being; or rather detaches him from his place in history and rests upon him as a timeless presence, the ever-accessible incarnation of the highest. There is indeed peril that much of this will be cleared ruthlessly away by levelling and modernizing habits of thought which criticize religion as if it had the function of science and neglect the needs of the inner life as if it were an impertinent and disturbing beggar, or by a complaisant religious modernism which yields too far to these habits. It is truth that for the soul the intervention of centuries is irrelevant and that Christ is a present and intimate saviour. For it was true that in intent his compassion and will to understand knew no limit and that he reserved a delicate sympathy for every soul that might come to him. That he asks men to repent, brings them forgiveness, gives them strength to amend, and is with them as consoler and support, has a truth far profounder than the barriers of historic time that divide him from us. It is true that simple souls (and in this all souls are simple) may cast their cares on him and feel relief. In this light, as the instantaneous deliverer of the spirit, an air of the transcendent and miraculous justly clings about him,—an air of one "supernatural, superrational, super-everything." To tamper with it seems to threaten his power and competence as a deliverer. The philosophy does not yet exist, nor the delicate justice to the facts, which would fully interpret and vindicate all this. In the interests of the soul during a difficult period of transition it may for some be far truer to surround the doctrine of the Virgin-birth with a wide and inviolate circle of reverence and caution, than to enter, as here, upon analysis. It is unpardonably wrong to teach something untrue because it will do good, but it may be right to refrain from teaching something true to certain persons because it will do harm; that is, because it would be asking too much to expect them to discern it without further intellectual experience, in its true perspective. No false word should be said, but—any word, in this sphere, paralyzing to the spiritual life is a false word. Few critics appear to grasp the whole function of symbolism. It is common to say "Oh that is symbolism, is it? Very well. But putting symbolism aside and speaking seriously," etc. It is not perceived that a symbol may be an instrument of knowledge, a means to practical truth, that its office is to exert forthwith the power upon life that philosophic truth *ought* to exert when at length secured and seen in all its true proportions.

Thus the bishops were hastening to the defence of a life, a habit of spiritual devotion, a source of power. Minds accustomed to an accepted body of ideas and not to its analysis must feel the whole threatened if rude hands are laid on any part. None the less the deep truth in Christian dogma must in its own interest be freed as soon as possible from literal misstatement of historical or cosmic fact and relieved from any conflict with the discoveries of intelligence. The gospel of intelligence must fully be joined to the gospel of the spirit. The task of complete synthesis is perhaps the most arduous that the human mind has ever attempted and it is but too easy for the advance-agents of enlightenment to "substitute a rude simplicity for the complexity of truth." Still, those who say, "This is a difficult time of intellectual transition" must not proceed, by a policy of persistent silence, to make that time as long as possible. Reserve within the church, which every mind of judgment and weight knows to be sometimes indispensable, should have its limits and never be taken up as a permanent attitude; it should keep watch for the opportunities to carry the transition forward.

Still more firmly must it be said that to disregard Christian morals in the attempt to preserve Christian doctrine is of unhappy omen. The bishops address an emphatic admonition to con-

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science, declaring that a non-literal interpretation of the clause concerning Christ's birth is "plainly an abuse of language," implying that it is "to trifle with words and cannot but expose us to the suspicion and danger of dishonesty and unreality." Indeed they go further and appear to imply or suggest that it is flatly inconsistent with "honesty in the use of language." To conscience they appeal, let conscience speak. To bring such charges by plain implication against so many men of long service and honorable standing without taking up, or hinting at the existence of, the case for the defence, as stated above and in innumerable other forms before, without considering the decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the mother-Church of England, without evincing any sense that such men must have something to say for themselves and that such a movement in history can hardly have been oblivious of moral considerations: this was to risk using their authority, as unhappily they have actually used it, to promulgate or suggest an injurious slander.

The bishops continue: "Objections to the doctrine of the Virgin-birth [meaning the literal doctrine] . . . . have been abundantly dealt with by the best scholarship of the day." They have of course been "dealt with" by scholarship of various grades, but the bishops evidently mean, not merely dealt with, but effectually met. What a curious conception of the legitimate grounds of belief is betrayed by assuring us that all is well because "objections" "have been abundantly dealt with!" To prove an alleged historical fact what we need is sufficient evidence that it occurred: to controvert the objections that happen to have been made by this or that person or even to offer an explanation of the difficulties presented by the records, is not the primary requirement. That we are entitled to assume an alleged occurrence to have taken place until objections are made to it, which then have to be "dealt with," does indeed appear to be the impression of many minds but it receives no encouragement from logic. If the testimony of the church is invoked as the initial authority then that authority must first of all be validated from the ground up as adequate in respect of this particular event.

It would have been a more congenial task to write this article without a word to intimate that one position on the historical question was better intrenched than the other. But the bishops in an official document have undertaken to pronounce that the position they oppose is based on inferior scholarship. Once more, we have no right by our considerate reserves to prolong the period of precarious transition which they are intended to safeguard. The Pastoral Letter has precipitated a necessity for plain speaking under which we can no longer courteously cloak the fact that no thoroughly educated man believes in the literal Virgin-birth;—though many men do so whose spiritual life, ability and efficiency command our admiration. By education I do not mean learning, but the possession of a competent common-sense training in judging of ordinary matters of evidence. It by no means follows that all who do not believe are thoroughly educated. Loyalty to the clergy is a fine thing, so long as it is consistent with loyalty to the church and to humanity. It is sometimes said that the literal version of the doctrine is rendered so highly probable by certain presuppositions that it does not require such ample evidence as is supposed. But the presuppositions themselves rest upon the slenderest basis of evidence. It is not until we recognize that here too are stern matters of moral principle, that the faithful pursuit of truth by the path of sound method and intellectual honor—a well-marked path for those who sufficiently desire it—is the one hope of mankind for the solution of its problems that we shall escape from the welter of arbitrary opinion.

DICKINSON S. MILLER.

Do Workingmen Deserve Homes?

THERE was no reason, of course, why I should have been reminded of Marie Antoinette. This elderly bank president (male) certainly did not look like that royal lady. He was fat and Rotarian, he wore gold things attached to chains running into his pockets, he occupied himself with pushing papers back and forth on the mahogany top of his desk.

And yet the comparison crossed my mind for a moment as we sat and talked about the housing problem of the poor in New York City. Or rather, *I* did; as far as he was concerned, he said, he didn't see that there was any special housing problem. If the poor didn't like the living conditions offered them here, why didn't they go somewhere else? "Housing is governed by the law of supply and demand. If demand forces the rent up higher than the people can pay, it is their job to meet the new scale."

This impressed me; for like all Americans I was brought up to regard the law of supply and demand as coming right after the Ten Commandments, and perhaps ahead of some of the milder ones. I should have explained sooner that I had called on this banker on behalf of a group of twenty professional men in New York who wanted to build a coöperative apartment house for themselves and their families in a nearby garden suburb. We wished to borrow money for building, on the usual terms. But though his institution lends vast sums for residential construction, he announced firmly that he would not provide us with one cent.

"We can do a good deal better with our money

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than that," he said. "You are planning ordinary middle grade construction. By adding only a little to the cost per cubic yard, we can build something which will rent for a big price to rich tenants. The margin of profit is much larger, and that means more for the bank. We're not here for philanthropy; we're here to do the best we can by the stockholders."

Here I plucked up courage to mutter doggedly, What would become of the rest of the population if all the money were to be spent on building for the rich? It was then that I got the reply quoted above, which rang an echo in my head from the French queen of a century and a quarter ago, with her famous advice to the peasants.

It would be unfair to suppose that this banker was in any way exceptional. His viewpoint is shared by nearly every other financial man in New York—as I found to my sorrow by calling on a dozen more of them and getting the same answer in all cases. The policy he outlined has been followed consistently in that community since the war though there is now more willingness to lend on lower priced construction since it has been discovered that high rents can be secured regardless of the quality. With a pitiful few exceptions which I shall describe later, every bit of building done there in recent years has been for the rich. So far as I am aware this is true throughout the United States, at least in the cities where land values make apartment houses the only economical form. In New York almost no building is being done which a family can afford to occupy if its total income is less than $2,500 to $3,000 a year. More than two thirds of all the families in New York receive less than the former figure.

In other words: private enterprise in the building trade has completely broken down in New York in providing new housing for the great bulk of the citizens. The recent construction is all for a well-to-do minority; the rest of the people stay in old houses, pay more rent than they can afford, and suffer seriously from other consequent conditions. Yet private industry has achieved this colossal failure in the face of a huge subsidy from the authorities: the subsidy of tax exemption.

I write that sentence with chagrin; because as a newspaperman I had a good deal to do with the adoption of tax exemption. I then believed, as everyone believed, that the saving in taxes, amounting to one third of the total cost of every $5,000 apartment, would cause such a rush of building that the shortage of 100,000 homes would be ended and rents would fall.

I was wrong. We were all wrong. A rush of building followed, it is true—coinciding with a similar rush all over the country, in cities without tax exemption as well as those with it. Hundreds of new apartment houses were built, in outlying sections such as the Bronx. These apartments are uniformly and hideously ugly. They are of cheap and flashy construction. The rooms are small, and many are badly ventilated and lighted, despite the high prices they bring. The exemption law put millions of dollars into the builders' pockets, and took away millions from other taxpayers who were forced to carry the load; but not a cent was passed on to the tenants who were the primary object of our concern. These new apartments were all rented, promptly, to people who could afford (or at least, were able) to pay not less than $15 a room a month. In most cases it is $20 a room. Yet even the lower figure is beyond the average man's reach.

Look at it concretely for a moment. The "typical" family consists of four and a fraction persons, and can hardly be housed decently in less than four rooms—two bedrooms, livingroom and kitchen—in fact, no American standard of living can be maintained on less than at least five rooms. The largest percentage of the family budget which is allowed for rent as a rule even among the poor whose allotment for this item is highest, is twenty-five percent. Sixty-nine percent of the households in New York have a total *family* income of $2,500 a year or less. Let us forget the large number who receive much less, and look at the plight of the $2,500 man. Even if he spends the maximum, his total rent ought only to be $625 a year, or $12.75 a room a month. On the island of Manhattan there has been, as I have said, virtually no building for three years at less than $15 a month, and much has been at $20, $40 or $50.

Not all New York building, to be sure, is apartments. In outlying sections, many single houses are being built under tax exemption. Of these it is sufficient to say that, either to buy or to rent, they are just as far out of the average man's reach.

Those authorities who have studied this question most closely believe that there is no solution which does not provide new construction in large quantities to rent at not more than $10 a room. New housing of this character, with the few exceptions of which I shall speak in a moment, does not exist today. This is not because it is economically impossible. There is no financial reason why 100,000 new apartments should not be constructed this year in New York to rent at $9 a room. But under the prevailing principle of "charge all the traffic will bear," such housing will not be constructed; or rather, it will be, and the tenant will be charged $15 or $20 a room for it.

What is the situation in New York from the citizen's point of view after three years' experience with tax exemption? Let me quote a few words from the report just issued by the State Commission of Housing and Regional Planning, headed by Clarence S. Stein, the distinguished architect and expert on housing:

> In New York City the housing emergency still exists. In spite of the large number of dwellings constructed during the past two years, tenants are in no better position today than they were in 1920 to bargain with landlords. Rents have risen continuously and congestion has increased. Families are being forced into poorer and

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smaller quarters. They are obliged to double up, two families living in rooms which under normal conditions would be occupied by one family; they are increasingly forced to take in lodgers. The dilapidated, unsanitary old houses which were considered uninhabitable in 1920 are now fully occupied and overcrowded. The conditions of upkeep and repair have grown steadily worse.

What this means to health, morals and happiness, no intelligent person needs to be told. When the landlords have the tenants at their mercy, there is always a tendency to make only necessary repairs, or none. In many instances the law is being flagrantly violated, endangering health or even life itself. Complaints to the city authorities on this head have suddenly shot up from 35,000 to 100,000 a year. Plumbing gets out of order and stays so. Unpainted fire escapes rust away and menace lives. Overcrowding, with two or more families in one apartment, obviously endangers the morals of young people. Infectious diseases take an increased total when it is not possible to remove the healthy members of the family from contagion.

Rents in New York at the end of 1923, investigated in eight blocks, showed increases of forty to ninety-three percent in the three years' time. Among 8,500 families living in all parts of the city in buildings of all types the average rent per month increased between 1921 and 1923, from $26.82 to $30.70. Such increases mean for the householder one of two things: since he can't enlarge his income to keep pace, he is either forced to move into a poorer apartment, or if he stays where he is, his family takes in lodgers and perhaps goes without food, clothing and other essentials in the effort to keep a roof over their heads.

Meanwhile, a few public-spirited individuals and corporations are demonstrating in and near New York what is possible in the way of housing when it is not left solely to private enterprise. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has just completed in the Borough of Queens 2,125 apartments, into which that number of families are moving as I write, at $9 a room plus $6.75 for a "dining alcove." Heat, hot water, and modern private bathrooms are included at this price. The enterprise is not charity: the Metropolitan receives a reasonable interest rate plus adequate amortization and depreciation.

There is even more to the story than this. Through the unusual abilities of an architect, Andrew J. Thomas, who has devoted his life to the housing problem of the city dweller, these 2,125 families live under conditions which cannot be had at any price on Park Avenue or Riverside Drive. Every room is an outside room. Each house sits in a garden of which it occupies but about half the space. Many authorities believe that in such plans as these is the future solution of housing for all city dwellers everywhere.

But at present, work of this sort is not being done in quantities at all adequate to the size of the problem—as is evidenced by the 30,000 or so persons who tried to get into the 2,125 Metropolitan apartments. A few other organizations—the Phelps Stokes Foundation, the City and Suburban Homes Construction Company, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and his associates have done a little. Coöperative experiments in Brooklyn, begun two or three years ago, are providing homes at prices within a poor man's reach. In the long run, coöperative enterprises may constitute the answer, in view of the fact that regardless of any other consideration the apartment house is the most economical form of housing construction. For greatest efficiency, however, it ought to be conducted on a big scale—say, five or six hundred families at once. But, such an effort will require a long process of education and we must reconcile ourselves to direct aid from the state.

If we should do this, we should only be following a well-established European precedent. England and Germany have been building houses for over fifty years and more. Half a million homes have been constructed in western Europe by state aid since 1919. New York might well consider what has been done by the city for which it was once named. Amsterdam, in Holland, has built thousands of new houses itself and has subsidized the building of thousands more by coöperative societies and privately. This city, whose rulers seem miraculously intelligent, has for years been buying land in its own outskirts, thereby making sure that the unearned increment which comes with increase of population shall go to the municipality and not to speculators. Its own land is never sold, but leased for long terms. No subsidy is given except when it is guaranteed that the rent-payer shall not be gouged. In general, the subsidy is such as to make up the difference between a fair return on the property and what the workingman-tenant can afford to pay.

I realize that this sort of "state interference in private business" seems to go against a stubborn grain in the American character. We have a feeling that whatever the great god Business doesn't take on himself to do ought not to be done at all. As soon as new functions for the state are proposed, we begin to worry about graft and corruption (though we are complacent about the large number of enterprises in which it is already engaged, many of which were once as sacredly "private" as housing).

The writer confesses that he shares this herd-feeling, to some degree; yet what alternative is there? The single taxer thinks he has a panacea, I know; and so does the Socialist. But the people of New York need not only an ultimate millennium, but decent houses at a fair price just as quickly as it is possible to get them. Unless we are to admit that our government is unfit to perform a vital function which is being carried on successfully by most of the European powers, we must grapple squarely with the question of state aid. And this time, it must aid the people, not the profiteer.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

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With Charity for All

JUST before closing time Chester A. Donner, the Reliable Druggist, came into Elmer's place to buy a copy of the Movie Review.

"You gotta hand it to Coolidge this time, Elmer," he said. "That was a fine speech he made last night."

"Did you read it?" asked the news-store man.

"Ye—es."

"Neither did I. But it *must* have been a good speech. It was made on Lincoln's Birthday."

"Well, I guess it wouldn't do this country any harm to have a little more Lincoln at that. Were you thinking of giving me change out of that fifty cents?"

"Oh, excuse me, Chet. I thought you were just slipping me a little token of esteem. Old schoolmates and all. I've been getting such an earful of philanthropy stories lately I'm all balled up.

"Speaking of Lincoln, there's one of his doctrines they've been carrying out for fair down there in Washington."

"I'd like to know what it is."

"With malice toward none, with charity for all. Especially that charity stuff. I never knew a time when folks loosened up so much. As the preacher said at the Brick Church last time I was there, 'we are putting the Golden Rule into everyday life.' It's getting so whenever I see that rich farmer, Herb Sawyer, on Main Street I think he's on the way here to give me six or eight cows. That's how they do things in Washington.

"One day last fall, Secretary Mellon was feeling good and he said: 'Listen here, let's make taxes so low that even the rich can enjoy them.'

" 'Not only that,' said Hi Johnson, 'I move we give five billion dollars to the soldiers. They're nice fellows.'

"Another bird piped up: 'These Europeans owe us a lot of jack. Let's tell 'em to forget it.'

"A little fellow back in the corner got this off of his chest. 'We have the finest merchant marine,' he said, 'that was ever tied to a dock. S'pose we give it to some deserving shipping company.'

"Give and let give was their motto. 'Christmas comes but once a year,' they snickered. 'Where do you get that stuff?'

"Every day was everybody's birthday, and the streets were all clogged up with young fellas carrying suspicious looking satchels.

"Nobody was safe. This George Creel was ambling along one night, never suspecting that he had a friend in the world, when a guy with clear blue eyes sneaked out of a dark alley and slipped him five thousand bucks.

"A lame duck went waddling down the street and he bumped into a petroleum of finance.

" 'It's a pleasant day,' the hasbeen statesman remarked.

" 'Nice of you to say that. Have a house and lot. Excuse me now. I gotta beat it along to the Navy Department. Denby left his glasses at home today and it's a good time to get some helpful papers signed.'

"There was a spirit of give and take everywhere. Currency fresh from the refinery slipped from hand to hand. The Who's Whos looked like they worked in a garage and anybody found smoking in the Interior Department was arrested for arson. Faces that had not met solid food for years were wearing nosebags at the Willard, and threadbare suits were all lumpy with assets. The bread line over by the Veterans' Bureau would take an hour to pass a giving point.

" 'We must do our duty by the poor doughboys,' kidded Colonel Forbes.

" 'And we are the poor dough boys,' cried his laughing little playmates.

"But the open hand movement was not confined to Washington. Over in Baltimore Whosis Anderson was sitting in his office and in blew a teetotal stranger and slapped down twenty-five smackers. Anderson went to the window and whistled to a nice sober guy that happened to be passing. 'Here,' he said, 'whoever you are, put this where it will do the most good.'

"I don't suppose there's been so much juicy kale floating around since the White Sox played Cincinnati.

"Remember about that newspaper guy, Shaffer, out west? Well, he was sitting gassing with an oil king and the conversation turned to soconomics.

" 'Here's a good one,' said the kerosene kid. 'This will hand you a laugh. First you gotta think of a number.'

" 'Well, I'll be the goat,' said the publisher. '$125,000.'

" 'Righto,' said the oiligarch. 'My satchel carrier will bring it to you as soon as he gets back from Washington.' This cutup went on, 'He's down there tying an oilcan to an oil candidate.'

" 'What am I supposed to do, if any?'

" 'Nothing at all. This is adjusted compensation. Sinclairity begins at home,' he said.

"Probably we don't know half of it. Stories of foolish generosity are on every lip."

"Including Vanderlip."

"Aw, Chet, behave!"

"Well," said the Reliable Druggist, "I hav'n't seen any of that easy money splashing around here in Woppington."

"It's got me nervous, though," Elmer replied as he prepared to close up the shop. "I'm getting so I hate to pass Jake Reisner's filling station on the way home. Some dark night a guy with clear, blue eyes is going to rush out and give me seventeen dollars."

FELIX RAY

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The Shelton

The Shelton, a hotel, by Arthur Loomis Harmon. New York: Lexington Avenue and 49th Street.

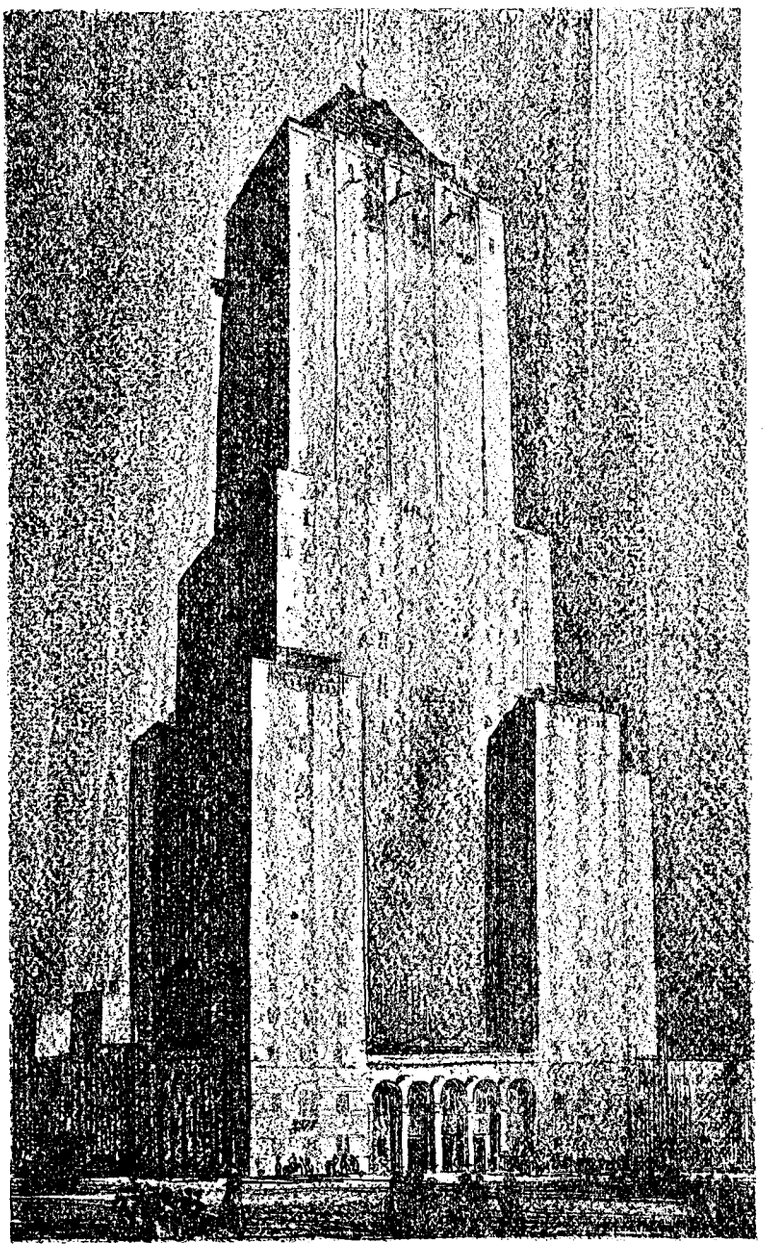
ARCHITECTURE is perhaps the most neglected, perhaps the most observed of all the arts. Newspapers and magazines do not fail to chronicle the latest achievements in the fields of drama, painting, sculpture and literature, and now moving-pictures, our latest form of art-expression, daily acquire more and more front-page space due, in large measure, to the extra-curriculum activities of their exponents. But of architecture we hear little except in the journals devoted exclusively to the interests of the profession. This apathy on the part of the average man is often only his fear of becoming involved in the technicalities of this most complicated calling. A conversation between brother architects frequently abounds in references to such mysteries as spandrels, soffits, pendentives, fenestration and architraves, which leave the casual listener cold not to say bored.

I often think of a discussion of the buildings at the Paris Exposition in 1900 at a luncheon where the dynamic John M. Carrère held the floor. He was in a ferment at the architectural aberrations he had seen, the tortured and twisted columns, the overloaded detail and general effect of "patisserie" which the French dismissed with the casual, "C'est amusant."

It by no means amused Mr. Carrère. It horrified and offended him and he expressed his feelings with his usual forcefulness. It happened, however, that his immediate table neighbor was a guest whom I had innocently brought to the meeting, a New York stock-broker with all the unconsciousness of art matters which that occupation usually implies. To him Mr. Carrère turned with a vehemence of appeal which seemed to demand a reply and asked, "Can you imagine the effect of two broken pediments meeting at an angle of forty-five degrees?"

I shall never forget the look of anguish on the face of my friend as Mr. Carrère glared at him, waiting to jump down his throat at the faintest sign of an argument. Then as the speaker turned his attack to his other neighbor the broker leaned across the back of the chair and whispered desperately, "For the love of Mike, switch it to dog-fights or something where I can make good." His whole attitude was, "You got me into this; now get me out."

Aside from these technical considerations I am inclined to think that the very obviousness of architectural creations removes them from the topics which go to make up news or conversation. It does not occur to us to say, "Good morning, have you seen the Woolworth Building this morning?" any more than we would ask a friend if he had recently inspected the Hudson or the Palisades. Our great buildings rapidly become one with the works of nature. But this is far from saying that they are unnoticed or ignored. On the contrary I believe that no form of art enters so deeply, because so unconsciously, into the soul of our people.



Rockwell Kent

What we do not realize is that America is on the threshold of an architectural development which is the most important—because the most original—contribution which this country has ever made to any form of creative art. This is a fairly large order, but it is based on what I think is the sound premise, that in no other branch of aesthetics have we had so complete a set of surrounding conditions which demanded a new solution. Our graphic, plastic and literary arts descend in an unbroken line from what has gone before, the variations being those of the individual. But what can be said of the architect who faces the problem presented in New York today, namely that of designing a building on a relatively restricted area towering to a height of thirty or forty stories above the street level? Nothing like it has confronted the designers and builders of earlier ages, nor does it exist today in other countries. In New York City we find this problem boiled down to its essence. Here the two forces of a tremendous population and an equally tremendous land-value meet and the line of least resistance is upward.

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In a brief paper it is impossible to discuss the gradual steps by which the sky-scraper has taken unto itself the attributes of a national monument, as racial and distinctive of America as the Parthenon is of ancient Greece. We have only to look at the examples of a decade ago to see how the heritage of classicism persisted with its superimposed orders of columns and its elaborate cornices. The designers of these buildings were conscientiously trying to express a new architectural thought with an old vocabulary.

Little by little this old vocabulary has been cast aside. Cornices, columns, all the trappings of an earlier day, are disappearing. Our architects are learning that in the structures demanded on the increasingly tight little isle of Manhattan the determining factors of design are such elemental matters as mass, bulk, silhouette, floor-space, light, with detail and prettiness a secondary consideration.

Almost every day it seems, a new building shoots up to change the sky-line of America's metropolis. Back of the great change in design becoming more and more evident is the recent zoning-law which determines the height of buildings in relation to the size of the property they occupy and the thoroughfares upon which they are situated. This law, designed to avoid the dark canyons which have made lower New York a grim and forbidding district, results in structures which set back step by step from the building line in terraces which recall a titanic version of ancient Babylon, as indeed New York may be.

One of the most successful solutions of this modern problem of ours is the new Shelton building on Lexington Avenue, between 48th and 49th streets. Its design is a romantic and thrilling achievement which will long stand as a monument to the architect, Arthur Loomis Harmon. There is a fitness in his training which has been distinctly American, from his school days in the architectural department of Columbia through his post-graduate course in that splendid finishing school, the offices of McKim, Mead and White. Evidences of Mr. Harmon's good taste were first evident to the professional world in the series of designs which he executed for various Allerton Houses. Invariably his treatment of these façades suggested a pleasant sense of domesticity, skilfully imparted to large structures. There is nothing cold or bare about them; they look not at all like office buildings, but like what they are, comfortable, homelike dwellings in the heart of a great city.

In the Shelton Mr. Harmon has "carried on." The opportunity was a great one, for the building, in its motives and functions, implied a much more complicated program than that which governed his earlier work. The size alone might have proved a daunting factor to a less courageous artist. But in this design we feel no hesitation or fumbling. It has, rather, sheer audacity. One feels that it must have been carried out from the first sketches to completion with enthusiasm. I like to think of the cold chills of excitement which must have tickled the draughtsmen's spines as they saw the great tower creeping story by story to the skies. If they didn't cheer when it was finally "topped out" they . . . but they must have, and I always feel like joining them whenever I catch a glimpse of their work.

The Shelton is more than mere living quarters. Its organizers, realizing the special demands of this specialized age, have taken a step forward in this new "residence for men." In it are combined such club features as pool, gymnasium, squash courts, card-rooms, library, bowling alleys and, of course, complete restaurant facilities. These are mentioned only to show the nature of the architectural problem, which at once escapes from the more intimate character of a simple apartment house. And yet, after all, the building is primarily a home for over a thousand men. It can be imagined that it was not easy to keep a domestic "smell," to use an architect's word, in a structure of this size. But the Shelton does it. Something in the size of the windows, the texture of the brickwork, the quality of the detail, and probably numerous other elements remove it definitely from the category of business buildings, while it still retains the monumental aspect proper to its size. The building is a subtle expression of its uses, beyond which we can say little except in the discussion of detail.

The plan problems of the New York architect of today are by no means as simple as they were a few years ago when buildings were but built "en bloc" from footings to the inevitable cornice, all floors, except the first, being repetitions of the one below. Nowadays, what an architect not only can do but what he *must* do is much more definitely determined by the building code and his plan must change as he soars upward. This constantly decreasing area has the happy result of substituting exterior terraces for interior courts, an exchange no one will regret. First attempts to conform with the new law caused one pessimist to say that architecture was, more than ever, just one setback after another, but such creations as the Bush Terminal Building, the picturesque Hecksher Building and now the Shelton prove that this new order may be translated into forms possessing a romantic beauty never achieved under the old conditions. Mr. Harmon has skilfully adapted himself to the modern mandates, disposing the masses of his building with a fine sense of symmetry and simplicity, the central tower which ultimately survives the paring process rising with an effect of splendid solidity, hemmed in and buttressed as it is by the flanking masses of the lower stories.

The silhouette of these new buildings is fascinating and in the Shelton advantage is taken of the terraces which are roofed at various points, the sturdy pergola treatment inevitably evoking the "hanging gardens" of an earlier day. These terrace roofs look very light and delicate compared with the mass of the masonry pylons which they crown, and at the same time they give a tremendous sense of "scale" to the whole.

What might become, without much thought and many hours over the drawing-board, a mere collection of chimneys of varying heights is saved from any such criticism by the interesting vertical divisions of the several elements of the design, the brickwork being ribbed and subdivided with a canny appreciation of the desirability of wider panels at the corners. Another enlivening feature is the texture of the brick surface, in which bricks are projected at irregular intervals which successfully break up what might have been aridity without falling into the much worse fault of the too-consciously picturesque.

The detail, of which there is amazingly little, is of a bold Byzantine character. But really it might be almost anything. The point is that it is well placed, vigorous in scale and instinct with a romanticism which inspires the whole building.

I find myself constantly coming back to that word "romantic" and I think that perhaps the two principal reasons for that elusive quality have yet to be mentioned. The first is that the building slopes back, or kicks out, if you will, in the two stories which form the base of the shaft. This flaring base gives an impression of a tremendous, ground-gripping solidity as if the building conscious-

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ly spread out its feet and said, "Here I am; move me if you can." The second . . . and O, the most alluring reason in the world . . . is that all the superimposed walls actually curve. They have the magic attribute of entasis, that vitalizing, sensitive curve which gives the classic column its undying beauty. What it is we know not though we may suspect that in it lies something of the secret of nature. But, whatever the secret, it wakes something deep within us. It is this factor, I think, from which the building derives its verve and go, its sense of magic growth with all its ponderous bulk. It is this which makes the Man-in-the-street, that final court of last appeal, stop dead in his tracks when he first comes in sight of the Shelton and murmur, "Gee Whiz, *some* building, I'll say."

I can imagine no more perfect tribute.

GEORGE S. CHAPPELL.

Beggar on Horseback

Beggar on Horseback, by George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, suggested by a play by Paul Apel. Broadhurst Theatre, February 18, 1924.

BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK sets out with a young man, a musician, who has no money and is beginning to teach, to make orchestrations of cheap scores; in short the current of American life does not carry him easily and truly toward creation. He must live and for the most part the world around him finds life vivid enough; there is activity, of food, clothes, pleasure, money, and success, if a man wants a sensible success. The girl who thinks she'll marry him believes all this and brings her parents to call, to an awkward tea; and the girl the young man really loves, who lives across the hall and works for her living, urges him to make his life easy and to gain leisure for his art by marrying money. In a fit of disappointment at finding that his love does not seem to be returned, the young man telephones the millionaire jazz girl and they are engaged. He falls asleep.

On the stream of jazz from next door he is borne into a dream. This rich, busy, raw, jazz, middle-class, successful American family surround him with their life. They give him a room of columns, with red velvet, to be changed shortly, every day if you like, it can be done over, what color do you think? The young man is enveloped in all this, hustled into business, taken to suppers. He kills the whole family, is interviewed and by the time the last word is out of his mouth, the papers have the extras out, and the newsboys come crying them down the theatre aisles as the curtain falls.

How good it all is, you breathe largely there in your seat as the lights come on. Expressionism has found a home for itself. To use expressionism to reveal the inmost tragic and poignant depths of the soul requires a great poet, and only in moments have I seen instances, and they were fragmentary, of expressionistic writing that seemed profound and biting, seemed to have some centrifugal felicity of power that brought all things to the light. And in those successful moments expressionism drops back so naturally into the general poetic method that there is nothing to be said. But expressionism applied in the comic spirit to American life seems ideal. It establishes a kind of jazz poetry. It has the flash and haste and hit-if-you-can that most American living has. It caricatures, reveals, delights—or at least it might do so. In this first act of Beggar on Horseback it does.

In fact you sit there hearing those lines, seeing those quick changes and flashes of satire and you wonder if these people in the orchestra chairs will go on laughing like that at what is so clearly a terrific comment on themselves and their popular life; the very nature of the life characterized ought to imply that profound comment would not engage for long their lively attention. Nevertheless the curtain falls and you feel lit up with the point and speed and jolly observation in this play.

After ten minutes of the second act, however, the wonder diminishes. The young musician is being tried for his life, he gives his pantomime with music and is condemned to a factory of art, where under the right control he will produce what people want, lots of money in it if managed right. But the audience is no longer revealed, bitten, rubbed over with amusing but stinging revelation. The trial has no important accuracy as a satire, as an expressionistic and poetic cartoon of any court scene. It is burlesque but not very good satire. It is amusing more or less but not penetrating and not really very witty as comic liveliness of mind. Then comes a pantomime, with Mr. Deems Taylor's music.

The pantomime tells the story of a princess and a prince, married and stealing from their separate beds to wander the blossoming world abroad. They meet on a bench, flirt a while, unknown to each other; they go back to their beds, and at breakfast then they meet, make the formal conjugal kiss, and life goes on. The pantomime, with a delightful vista by Mr. Woodman Thompson, is done charmingly by Miss Grethe Ruzt-Nissen and rather flatly by Mr. George Mitchell, with Caesar and Pompey, the two pages messing up their bows and exits. The act ends.

In the last act the young musician is in his cell, and nearby the other arts are being made to pay. His father-in-law knows how to make art go. The young man prefers death. He wakes, the girl from across the hall—done attractively here by Miss Kay Johnson, though her voice is still a little off the place—comes again to say that she cannot hide her love, the engagement is broken, and everything is well. The young man, with the wise love of this girl beside him, will go on with his art.

What would make Beggar on Horseback, agreeable as it is all through, into a play of importance, would be a continuation of the exact comment on life, and especially on middle-class American life, that appears in the first act. This satire, tinged with love and with the purity that arises in the young man through his desire for beauty and creation, might move to a slightly darker note now and again, but the comic smile and the wit of it would in the end arrive only through this exactitude and this patient study with delight. And the pantomime would gain a thousand percent if, left quite as it is, it was made to appear as a relief from the banality of the life around, as escape into fantastic dream, as a not profound but willful and happy flight from a middle-class oppression and flatness. In sum Beggar on Horseback starts sharply toward something that, if it were achieved, would be gayer by reason of its subtlety, more biting for its reckless satire and crude truth, and more unforgettable because of its long thought and because of the wistful, frank reserve that underlies so much of American self-expression. It does not arrive at this something, though the promise is there often enough, and in the first act almost always.

All through Beggar on Horseback the acting of Mr. Roland Young stands out as possessing a particular quality that no other actor on our stage could quite achieve. There

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is a kind of poetic feeling, carried exactly the right distance for the situation in hand, that Mr. Young always conveys. There is constantly a security of technical approach. The voice might be warmer and the rhythm more flowing at times, but the slight dryness in the tone and the slight suppression in rhythm happen in this instance to add to the shy pathos of the young artist's portrait. And Mr. Young's comedy is such as can only come from poetic understanding and lively wits.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

[The New Republic welcomes communications from its readers in regard to subjects of current interest, and especially concerning articles which have appeared in its columns. Those of 300 words or less are necessarily more available for publication than longer letters.]

Hiram Johnson and the Southern Pacific Machine

SIR: In regard to the presidential candidacy of Hiram Johnson, there is one matter which needs explanation:

As to his tempered progressivism, his relation to the Hearst press, his oratorical capacity and his activity outside the Senate Chamber there seems to be a consensus of opinion. But his supporters claim that he smashed the Southern Pacific machine in California, throwing it out of politics, or words to that effect. Now when did this happen, and how? For at the time we in California had never heard of it, nor do I know that Johnson himself ever advanced such a claim.

The Central and Southern Pacific railways were built by four men whose estates held all the stock in both until 1899. In the settlement of their properties, the control passed to a New York firm, which placed them in the hands of Mr. Harriman, and the stock was sold to the general public.

It is supposed that the "machine" (an extra-legal defence against unfriendly legislation) was regarded as no longer desirable, and it passed away. Mr. Johnson came into public notice some six years later, through graft prosecution, becoming, in 1911, governor of California.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Stanford University, California.

Can We Trust the Politicians?

SIR: Here is a point in regard to the oil scandal and the third party movement which neither Mr. Owens's article nor your editorial in the issue of February 20 touches upon. If the platform enunciated at St. Louis last week by the Conference for Progressive Political Action may be taken as an index to the aspirations of the leaders of the new party movement, it seems to me that the hideous revelations which have lately proceeded from Washington—and the many others which the Progressive leaders of the La Follette group promise are forthcoming—do not indicate the existence of a condition in modern government favorable to the success of the chief measures upon which the Progressives are basing their hopes. The outstanding thing about the St. Louis platform is its insistence upon increased activity on the part of the federal government for the benefit of producers engaged in agriculture and transportation. The planks in this platform which will make a wide appeal to voters are the one calling for public ownership of the railroads, and the one urging the passage of the Norris-Sinclair bill. The result of adopting either of these policies would be a tremendous widening of governmental power, and an enormous increase in the volume of business carried on by the agents of the federal system.

Now, in view of the fact that part of an administration placed in office by a majority of 7,000,000 votes has just been exploiting the resources of the nation, and—as the Progressives charge—engaged also in managing fraudulently the Veterans' Bureau and in cheating the government out of a large share of the funds it earned during the period of federal control of the railroads, it seems that the inferences which may be logically drawn from these exposures cannot support the argument for bringing additional industries and activities within the scope of federal jurisdiction. What assurance is there that as a permanent thing, certain men who obtain control of our political machinery by methods which seem to be more inherent in modern social conditions than ever before will refrain from using federal offices and the resources of government for their own purposes? What assurance is there that the public will be shaken out of its apathy in regard to political matters? And as long as the public is apathetic, what hope is there that the government, for a long period, can manage a variety of complex concerns with efficiency and honesty?

As long as democratic theories control the operation of our political machinery, the federal administration must be political in character. The men who control it will be, on the whole, like men who control any large concern—those who have spent their lives learning its intracies and complexities. There is no guarantee that they will be inspired with a zeal for public welfare, for a career devoted to politics—especially in the humbler phases of local organization and propaganda—does not appeal to public spirited people nowadays. Those who engage in the minor operations of politics are likely to go in for what they can make out of it for themselves. Yet from this group of professional performers emerge the leaders who—excepting in accidental cases—occupy the national stage a few years before they pass on into obscurity.

This process explains the appalling scarcity of leaders in public affairs that has characterized the present generations. Under the American system, politics now draws to itself but few worthy amateurs, and those people who pursue it professionally devote themselves to it for other reasons than the commands of public spiritedness. Yet it is to this class which, under our democratic forms, the management of public utilities and larger enterprises will be entrusted, if the Progressive platform announced at St. Louis is accepted by an electorate unwilling or unable to keep a close watch upon the conduct of every branch of our complex government.

CURTIS NETTELS.

Madison, Wisconsin.

Toward a Coöperative Commonwealth

SIR: The methods of social change, like everything else, are subject to evolution. What were perhaps effective tactics in the past may prove less so today. After so many generations of progress, we still see the world chaotic and unbrotherly, and still gaze desperately about for new panaceas and martyrs. May not this latter fact be witness that our ways of changing society are not bringing adequate results, and that efforts in another direction might be more fruitful?

They who favor a fundamental change in our system of life, come to grips mostly with two outstanding difficulties. The unimaginative masses cannot see a different state of society than the one which confronts their very eyes, and having no means of comparison, shrug their shoulders and go to the movies, where visions are offered them ready made. The intelligent people ask what is proposed to replace this economic chaos, and how, and expect so detailed and exact a picture as cannot possibly be given because of the complex nature of a social system, and the necessarily new standards upon which its institutions would have to take slow growth.

Only one thing can satisfy both of these great groups of people, and that is Example. It presents the Ideal in both theory and practice, so that all may see, study, and compare it at once without vague conjecture and the probability of faulty reasoning. This method of Example is winning satisfactory, farreaching results all over the world in the form of coöperative movements.

Recognizing this trend, and believing it to be the chief source of real progress, a group has been organized to establish large and growing coöperative communities to bridge the gap between the present economic disorder and the Coöperative Commonwealth. We have friendly assurances of hospitality and help from a liberal government, and offer to interested people an

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opportunity to live their ideals now, under the guidance and application of coöperative principles.

Sympathizers, and others who may wish to help build up the organization as members, are urged to write for further details to A. C. C. M., Box 102, Times Square Post Office, New York City.

I. GOODMAN.

New York City.

A Request for Bret Harte's Letters

SIR: Mr. Geoffrey Bret Harte, grandson of Bret Harte the story-writer and novelist, is planning to collect Bret Harte's letters for publication. He wishes to be put in touch with persons in possession of letters of Bret Harte who will be good enough to lend them to him for copying and publication. The greatest care will be taken of all letters, and they will be copied and returned at the earliest possible moment. Mr. Geoffrey Bret Harte may be addressed care of the Farmers' Loan & Trust Company, 16 William Street, New York, N. Y.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY.

Boston.

A Would-Be Professional

SIR: To the average individual, who attends to his own business, there is something peculiarly irritating about the so-called "case worker." What is the basis for this reaction? Here is a person, who minds her own business by attending to the affairs of other people, and is excessively important in the process. Usually it is a woman. Is she needed, and is she a social asset? If so, why does she annoy us?

Obviously, as long as social maladjustment exists, there is destined to be relief and rehabilitation. The case worker's function ultimately, is to place such relief and rehabilitation to the end that there be no waste. She investigates, diagnoses and recommends treatment. She must know the facilities of the community, and the proper resources from which to draw aid. The case worker is a social middleman.

Theoretically, then, the case worker is a necessity, or a convenience. Actually, because of her mental attitude, she is rather a necessary evil. It need not be so. Social workers, in general, desire to dignify their work by calling it a profession. Herein lies the fault. A profession involves highly specialized training and technique, and cannot be carried on without such training. Any intelligent person, who puts his mind and time to it, can do case work. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, nurses, housewives, business men all do case work, at times. The standard case worker simply gives all her time to it. Case work, then, is applied common sense. And applied common sense does not create a profession. Schools to train these workers are centres where method of work is set forth for the purpose of turning out more efficient persons.

If the case worker would realize this fact—would go about her business in the knowledge that, while she is filling an important gap, she is doing only what the average professional and layman has not time, and too often not the inclination to do, she would improve her general standing. It is bumptiousness, always, that irritates.

Furthermore without the consciousness that she is establishing a profession, she might incline to be less aggressive in her job. Her efforts would smack less of meddling. She is where she is because she "knows the ropes." That is all, and that is enough. Her missions of service would antagonize no longer, but evoke the admiration and respect to which they are entitled.

E. P. HUNT.

Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

What is A Vocabulary?

SIR: In a recent issue of the New Republic, you asked: "What is a vocabulary?" and answered your own question, "Nine thousand words. It seems a lot. . . . Nine thousand is a towering figure." You were then kind enough to say that nine thousand words was my estimate of the working vocabulary of *the plain man in the street*. But I was misunderstood, and this last statement is beside the facts as I have investigated them.

What I believe is that an intelligent American artisan—a mechanician or locomotive engineer, for instance—has a vocabulary of not less than 5,000 words while educated persons—churchmen, doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.—are familiar with, if they do not use, from 8,000 to 10,000 words.

Outside the vocabulary used in home-life the churchman has a far wider range of words. If one may take the English Bible as a guide he must be familiar with the English equivalents of the 8,674 Hebrew words in the Old Testament and the 5,624 Greek words in the New Testament, or 14,298 words in all. . . . The purely technical vocabulary at the command of the practising physician is 14,968 words, to which may be added his knowledge of the vernacular and increase his vocabulary by at least 8,000 words—making 22,968 words in all.

Shakespeare's vocabulary, embraced by his plays, poems, and sonnets, totalled 24,000 words. Milton's poems were written with 13,000 different words, but this by no means indicates the range of his vocabulary.

The vocabulary at the command of the practising lawyer increases with the years of his experience, and the range of his practice. The most popular of law dictionaries, Bouvier's, lists approximately 13,000 terms as peculiar to the legal profession. But there are many kinds of law and this work—the edition before me—treats only of civil and criminal law.

To revert to the plain people and the speech of their day: the strength of their vocabulary depends on their environment plus their occupation. There are several thousand working parts in an automobile alone. There are in English no fewer than 3,000 words of one syllable with the meaning of which almost every person with pretensions to education is familiar. Granted an individual with a soul above radio (which in itself has a large vocabulary) with an interest in the affairs of his native land and its welfare, its progress in the arts and sciences, education, literature, commerce and industries, it is manifestly absurd to say that the strength of the vocabulary of such an individual—the number of words that he knows and uses as occasion requires—is limited to 1,000 words, or that a man of higher education does not command more than 5,000 words.

FRANK H. VIZETELLY.

New York City.

Woodrow Wilson

SIR: Your suggestion to the movies in your article Without Benefit of Hollywood in a recent issue of the New Republic would better, I think, serve as a suggestion to one of our poets,—if any be great enough; if not, to some poet of the future.

What material is here offered for a great spiritual tragedy with world-history for a background! But I should not end the tragedy as you do, on a negative note of depression and defeat. Rather should it be one of reconcilement, hope, and victory. For Woodrow Wilson died in the faith that one day his dream would triumph.

That "a dream can die" would indeed be cause forever of "bitterness" and "hot pain." But it will not die. One day America "will wake and remember and understand."

ANNIE L. SEARS.

Boston.

Our Dissatisfied Electorate

SIR: I know of a number of people who would follow a political Gandhi and cease to coöperate with the old parties. I know of Republicans who, when charged with the unfairness of the tariff bill toward the farmer, say "There's not so many people going to vote Republican as used to." Democrats also are dissatisfied with their leaders and their policies.

Is there to be no way in which these people can express themselves politically? Are those who do not believe in reaction to cease voting or vote for what they do not want? Do all the liberals in the two old parties put party above principle or are they afraid of political death?

G. L. FRENCH.

Grass Valley, Oregon.

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A Critical Examination of Psychoanalysis

A Critical Examination of Psychoanalysis, by Adolph Wohlgemuth. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

MR. ADOLPH WOHLGEMUTH of London, a well-known experimental-introspective psychologist, has written a Critical Examination of Psychoanalysis. "I had," he says, "to expose the inherent absurdity of Freud's teaching and ce n'est que le ridicule qui tue." Psychoanalysis has been ridiculed before, but since it still lives, one must believe that the ridicule was insufficient in quantity or quality. Wohlgemuth will do something beyond the common, and give us ridicule in the grand style.

In general I do not pay much attention to the laboratory psychologist's criticism of Freud. These critics have a way of referring to scientific psychology as though this were matter of general agreement, but when we read Watson on McDougall or McDougall on Wundt's "tissue of unacceptable hypotheses" and so on, in fact almost any one of them on any other not of his school, we conclude that scientific psychology is "my" psychology, and the other kind is "yours." Even Wohlgemuth admits that Freud *pretends* to be scientific. In spite of all this I read the book now reviewed, because I thought it might be more worth while than the general run, and in a sense it is. Its humor apart, which is heavy—very heavy—it is a good example of the way the laboratory psychologist misses the point. The criticism is painstakingly thorough and psychoanalysis would doubtless be demolished if it were centrally hit. In fact the blow is only a glancing one and leaves essentials as they were.

Wohlgemuth in some cases does a half job very well. For instance, he takes a dream that is not his—the dream of the seven fat and seven lean kine—and develops it analytically. He takes Freud's number cases and shows that he can deduce consequences as remarkable as Freud's own. But—although a professional introspector, he fails to introspect the operation seriously enough. He finds that he can associate to the incidents of Pharaoh's dream and arrive at a coherent interpretation. He manages to make Freud's numbers give all sorts of curious combinations that can be connected with incidents in his own life. What he does not consider is that all this is insignificant. To illustrate by an analogy. A telegram may come to a man saying, "Train delayed by floods," and cause him to turn pale and grow more and more agitated as memories and the fear of possible consequences gather about this news. His companion may have the same real interest in the arrival of the train, and the information may let loose in him a flood of reminiscences, yet these may be nothing but mere anecdotage. Associations can of course build up about any theme.

Differences of this kind are important, but Wohlgemuth makes reference to them only to ignore them. He thinks his competence as a psychologist enables him to study the *facts,* and he introspects carefully, but he does not see that his material is not to the point. If he had thoroughly, under introspective control, analyzed a dream important to himself, and compared it with his analysis of Pharaoh's dream, noting the difference of reaction in feeling and emotion in one case and the other, the operation would have had some value. So with the case of numbers, the interpretation of fairy tales, and other things. Wohlgemuth criticizes the analysts, quite justly I think, because they report results without ever using such controls, and then he does exactly the same thing from the other side. The Scientific mind—with a big S—is prone to this.

The truth in this matter of science is, I think, that all serious psychologies are scientific in so far as they systematically work for the advancement of our knowledge, and that none of them is scientific enough to offer us categories so clearly demonstrated as to be available for general use. In the achieved sciences there are practicable and agreed-on irreducible elements, but every psychologist has his own list of irreducible elements. The criteria are useful to the worker in his subject, but they are utterly useless for criticizing other people, with other aims. Wohlgemuth's original work is as different as possible in its purposes from Freud's. He has neglected the proverb of the cobbler and his last. He is in fact a very good psychological cobbler, but a very poor psychological sage.

Mr. Wohlgemuth is not a wit by nature but by intention, and it was indiscreet on his part to promise Freud's annihilation through his ridicule. Here are two epigrams which he so values that in default of place for them in the body of the text, he gathers them into a supplementary jewel chapter.

"Darwin discovered The Descent of Man, and Freud discovered that there wasn't a decent man."

"Darwin was for twenty years dreaming of the Origin of Species, but Freud presented us in a shorter time with a specious origin of dreaming."

It is hard for me to believe that Swift and Voltaire will, in the Elysian Fields, ask Wohlgemuth to be a third in that illustrious company.

The best chapter in the book is not a psychological chapter. Wohlgemuth objects, with warrant, I believe, to the abuse of dogmatic symbol interpretation, and he discusses at some length the symbol of the serpent, and the serpent as an object of veneration. Also he has at least one amusing passage. In satirizing the abstention of the analyst from any directing of the patients associations, he tells of accompanying a stranger in London whom he suspects of a Hyde Park complex, from the Mansion House to Hyde Park. The park is of course never mentioned, but by insidiously keeping the stranger from taking any turning that would lead elsewhere, Hyde Park is reached by him at last.

LEO STEIN.

The Fir and the Palm

The Fir and the Palm, by Elizabeth Bibesco. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50.

LET it be admitted at once that this is a clever book. In partial extenuation of this fault—for a terrible fault it is in the eyes of most book reviewers—the theme demanded clever handling if it was to take on substance at all. A fir tree, lonely on its northern height, dreams of a palm tree, mourning alone on a sun parched ridge. They have nothing better to do. Cyril loves Helen his wife with a white, restrained passion, of which she is unaware. Christopher, too, loves Helen, with a devotion pure enough to make your head ache. Helen loves Toby who has the glitter and cold blood of a serpent and a quite

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human anxiety to keep out of trouble. Toby is inclined toward Selina, who is a sophisticated ingenue not definitely inclined toward anyone. Virginia loves Matthew but fears that marriage would take the golden dust off his wings, and it may be only by virtue of the golden dust that he is anything at all. Mrs. Blaine poses herself decoratively, to what end none of the company knows. There are two time-expired soldiers of love, an Austrian diplomat and an English knight, to make sage comment, and a shrewd and acid dowager. None of these people have anything whatever to keep them busy, except that Helen works a little in her garden when frustrated love is more irritating than the sun, and Virginia goes slumming to get herself stirred up in behalf of the poor. Toby considers himself a man of action because he can't sit still; his idea of heroic action is going to Thibet.

You can't help comparing the pattern of this book to an elaborate, most civilized dance, of an age more stately and more frivolous than ours. Gorgeous ladies and gallant gentlemen lightly tread out the measures on a splendid waxed floor, sprinkled with green leaves—an invocation to nature—in a flood of amber light. The figures develop into hopeless complexities, as it seems to the onlooker. Then they suddenly dissolve into rudimentary simplicity, and combine again into a brief movement of stiff formality. The middle space is cleared; two dancers waltz up to a painted precipice and waltz back again. The music stops; everybody is where he was at the beginning, breathing perhaps a little faster. It was worth looking on.

It might be inferred that Elizabeth Bibesco's art strikes me as artificial. It does not. These people are real, almost libellously real. They are presented as extremely intelligent people, and they live up to their promise. Especially the women. The men are most intelligent when their conversation is most characteristically feminine. I'd except Cyril. His talk is masculine but you have to take his brilliancy largely on faith. But he is just a husband and does not matter much.

Neither is there any doubt about the reality of Helen's love for Toby, nor about the genuineness of Toby's aversion to getting entangled. The only test of reality in fiction is the inevitability of the unexpected, and by this test Elizabeth Bibesco's work is very real. These characters had to behave just as they did, although you didn't expect it of them.

It is not fair to an artist to go behind his craftsmanship and make the life he depicts the object of criticism. Yet one cannot help it. There is something about the life of talk—even good talk, like that of the world of the Fir and the Palm—which seems not to go well with the British genius. The French manage it very well. Perhaps it is because their civilization is so old and ripe that a Frenchman can be a professional talker without spending himself on the air. His rigid little egoistic self maintains itself inviolate whatever his pretence of giving himself entirely to the life of conversation. You never feel borne down by a sense of futility after following the fortunes of a group of French talkers. You do invariably with English talkers, whether they take twenty pages to a breath as in H. G. Wells or a single line as in Elizabeth Bibesco. The Englishman in action is superb, though his action may be useless or even pernicious. The Englishman settled down to a life of talk is dramatically just an empty space, even if the talk is wise and witty.

After reading this book I am unappeased. I have a vulgar hunger for a blood and thunder story. Or for some tale of an archaic, bearded Anglo-Saxon knight, reeking with sweet and campfire smoke, who throttles his enemy with a grim "That's that," repairs to his drafty castle to gorge himself on pork chines and brown ale, and to sleep peacefully all night by the side of his tawny, long-limbed wife.

ALVIN JOHNSON.

Birth Control for Clio

The Nations of Today, edited by John Buchan. First six volumes: France, Italy, Jugoslavia, Baltic and Caucasian States, British America, Japan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Each volume $5.00.

THESE volumes are the first installment in an ambitious attempt to bring out an historical series covering the history and economic life of all the leading states of the world, with major emphasis on the modern and contemporary period. In the eight pages of his "General Introduction" Mr. Buchan presents as admirable a case for the study of history, and especially the history of foreign states, as is known to the reviewer.

> This series has been undertaken to provide for the ordinary citizen a popular account of the history of his own and other nations, a chronicle of those movements of the past of which the effect is not yet exhausted, and which are still potent for the peace and comfort of the present. The writers conceive history as a living thing of the most urgent consequence to the men of today; they regard the world around us as an organic growth dependent upon a long historic ancestry. The modern view of history—apart from the pedantry of certain specialists—is a large view, subordinating the mere vicissitudes of dynasties and parliaments to those more fateful events which are the true milestones of civilization. Clio has become an active goddess and her eyes range far. History is, of course, like all sciences, the quest for a particular kind of truth, but that word "truth" has been given a generous interpretation. The older type of historian was apt to interest himself chiefly in the doings of kings and statesmen, the campaigns of generals and the contests of parties. These no doubt are important, but they are not the whole, and to insist upon them to the exclusion of all else is to make the past an unfeatured wilderness, where the only personalities are generals on horseback, judges in ermine and monarchs in purple. Nowadays, whatever we may lack in art, we have gained in science. The plain man has come to his own, and, as Lord Acton has put it, "The true historian must now take his meals in the kitchen."
>
> The War brought the meaning of history home to the world. Whether we like it or not, our isolation is shattered, and not the remotest nation can now draw in its skirts from its neighbors. The consequence must be that even those who are averse to science, and prefer to settle everything by rule of thumb, will be forced to reconsider their views. . . . In these circumstances it is inevitable that interest in foreign countries, often an unwilling and angry interest, should be compulsory for large classes which up to now have scarcely given the matter a thought. An understanding of foreign conditions—though at first it may not be a very sympathetic understanding—is forced upon us by the needs of our daily life.

To these broad and general reasons for studying and reading history, there may be added certain specific ad-

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vantages inhering therein. It will impress upon the reader the complexity of social relationships and the continuity of historic development; it will demonstrate the impossibility of wiping clean the cultural and social slate and making a sudden and fresh start; it should promote a better understanding of the best and wisest course to pursue; it will prove the impotence and futility of theories and phrases which are not grounded on fact and reality; and, finally, it should give one a more adequate perspective, and greater serenity and balance in analyzing present problems.

That these prolegomena are words of wisdom and insight few will deny, but, like most human designs and enterprises, the execution of the project, so far as may be judged from these six volumes in hand, falls lamentably short of the aspirations of the general editor in spirit and in letter alike. The actual editor of the volumes which have thus far appeared is Major-General Lord Edward Gleichen, whose ideals as to Clio's physiognomy and configuration indicate that he would evidently have her discover conjugal felicity and completeness at the hearth of Mars rather than in the embrace of Apollo. Without exception, the great majority of the historical material in these volumes is occupied with the detailing of just those trivialities which Mr. Buchan denounces in his introduction —"the vicissitudes of dynasties and parliaments, the doings of kings and statesmen, the campaigns of generals and the contests of parties." And such information as is given on economic and social matters, always infinitely less in volume than the history of political, military and diplomatic events, is not interwoven in a dynamic and synthetic fashion with the historical analysis, but is relegated to a separate section at the close of each volume. In other words, these volumes are in scope and content distinctly "old stuff" from the point of view of historiography. When one reflects what a remarkable opportunity existed in the way of historical achievement, if Mr. Buchan's ideals has been executed, one is tempted to suggest that if Clio should not be instructed in the secrets of birth-control she should at least be urged to be more discriminating in the choice of her friends.

Limitations of space forbid the attempt to deal specifically with the individual volumes. Those on Jugoslavia and the Baltic and Caucasian States will probably be regarded as the most valuable, because of the relatively greater dearth of good books in English on the history of these areas. Of these that on Jugoslavia is the more useful, primarily because of the material on geographical and economic factors contributed by Miss Newbigin. The volumes on Japan and British America are creditable, the latter being much the more needed of the two. The volume on France has a preface by André Tardieu, and one wonders what he can have to do with a series which aims to advance peace and good will among men, but a perusal of the volume explains everything. The emphasis is on the Third Republic, the history of which culminates in a paean to Poincaré and the military party, and in a bitter arraignment of Caillaux. The reviewer does not remember having seen outside of recently revised textbooks a more absurd interpretation of Franco-German diplomacy in the twentieth century than that contained in pages 159-179 of this volume. We may readily agree with Mr. Buchan that "peace is every man's chief interest," but it will not be secured by this type of historical writing.

While it has seemed necessary to lay considerable stress upon the shortcomings of these early volumes, the fact remains that it is a series which will make accessible much pertinent historical information, and will doubtless please the general reader much more than a set of volumes written in strict consonance with Mr. Buchan's objective, even if they will rarely achieve any of the salutary and therapeutic effects upon the readers which he so eloquently bespoke. It is to be regretted that such an enterprise could not have been entrusted to men like Pollard, Gooch, Toynbee, Zimmern, Marvin, G. M. Trevelyan, Marriott, Brailsford, Muir, and Seton-Watson, who would actually have been able to see such a project through in conformity with the laudable ambitions of the general editor.

HARRY ELMER BARNES.

Insects and Society

Social Life Among the Insects, being A Series of Lectures Delivered at The Lowell Institute in Boston in March, 1922, by William Morton Wheeler. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.00.

THE word "nature," as Huxley has pointed out, denotes in the strict sense, the sum of the world of phenomena, of things which have been and will be; among them, society. Yet society is a part of nature in which man plays the rôle of immediate cause and differs from nature in that it has a definite moral object. A naturalist like Professor William M. Wheeler does therefore a great service to the forces in league against muddleheadedness by bringing to the study of society so clear and suggestive a document as his Social Life Among the Insects proves to be.

Professor Wheeler, whose work on the Formicidae is one of the great monuments of American research in natural science, in six chapters which were originally given as lectures before the Lowell Institute, deals with the social beetles, the solitary and social wasps, the solitary and social bees, the ants proper and the termites. His avowed intention is the presentation of a sketch of our present knowledge of the behavior of the various groups of social insects. In this he most certainly succeeds for in addition to his long-recognized position as a scientist Professor Wheeler is a man of letters who has been able to turn the scientist's necessity for a free hand in the creation of significant word and phrase into the poet's vivid idiom. And in this achievement he has made no sacrifice of shrewdness in favor of romance, as even so great a figure as Fabre has unfortunately done.

It would be impossible even to suggest, within the limits of a brief review, the life stories, the strange habits and incredible powers of the many species of insects described in this remarkable book. The two chapters on ants alone tell a tale which no outline of history, no work of mysterious imagination, could possibly improve upon. And in this tale as also in the other chapters, is contained the germ of analogy to human life which, if logically dangerous, is none the less philosophically engaging. The story of the blood-red slave-maker ant (formica sanguinea) which has attained in the course of its evolution from more primitive ants to that quite human state of harboring in its midst a dangerous parasite, lomechusa strumosa, is as pregnant as any social tract ever written. The slave-maker seems to be unable to do without the presence of the beetle lomechusa which it feeds by regurgitating some of its avidly gathered nourishment. So far so good, but let charitable institutions of the human sort beware how they rise to cry "Hear! Hear!" for the larvae of lomechusa, in return for the charity, devour the brood of their host! Indeed, were it

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not for the fact that the lomechusa after pupation must remain buried in the ground in order to develop, and that the slave-makers, unaware of this necessity, dig up as many of the parasitic pupae as they can find and consequently destroy them, there would soon be no more formica sanguinea to delight the naturalist.

This weird story, which is nothing to what could be said of some of the gross and dangerous inconsistency of supposedly reasonable human beings, suggests many questions anent the reasons for the development of society as a factor in animal life. Although Professor Wheeler in his introductory chapter seems to give his approval to the pleasant but insupportable generalities of Prince Kropotkin concerning mutual aid among men and animals, he does not hesitate to point out that the species which develops parasitism is doomed to ultimate extinction and that a change from the independent individual existence to the social state is one sure way of becoming host to innumerable and inescapable parasites. This does not do much to prove that society is the great triumphant aim and end of organic evolution. In fact, with due allowances made for the ineffectuality of any analogy between the life of humans and that of other animals, it still may be true that society, the pitfall into which, from our tree-top heritage, we have ungracefully fallen, is but a confession of and a defence against weakness which at the last shall strike us down from our proud place as the deity, if not the king, of beasts.

Professor Wheeler is wise enough not to attempt to draw any analogy of this or of any other sort which could be accepted as definite evidence in favor of any one point of view. His work, however, leaves no uncertainty in the mind of the reader as to the truth of one thing. That thing is the fact that, if there is any one cause for the apparent failure of animal life to continue in those channels of evolutionary process which it must once have followed, it is the development of the social instinct among living beings. For those animals which have become social, and they are by no means as numerous as Kropotkin would have had us believe, are no longer moving along the trunk of the tree of life but are branches and terminated twigs carrying the vitality of the trunk out into the impalpable nothingness of air. The ants, of which there are no solitary species, are the chief branch of the insect world, while we, poor casuists that we are, hang like an old apple from the mammalian twig. Our one chance of salvation seems to be in a mysterious and terrifying vitality out of some exudation of which we build a spirit, sometimes subtle and sometimes murderous, that transcends mere intelligence. Professor Wheeler's remarkable book is a petal of the fine flower of that spirit.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

The Literary Discipline

The Literary Discipline, by John Erskine. New York: Duffield and Company. $1.75.

THIS is a collection of neat little essays on the limitations imposed upon literature by art, convention, morality, and so on.

The first, Decency in Literature, is a quiet, well-considered discussion of some restrictive tendencies lately exhibited. It is an old, old problem, and Erskine has nothing in particular to add to it. He preaches a decorum of art which should observe the limitations of its medium, be that stone, or harmony, or printer's ink. He finds an objection to the free expression of certain things in literature because "the great limitation of language is that it must be heard or read one word at a time." But who reads one word at a time? Surely no one beyond the chronological or mental age of ten. Surely not Mr. Erskine himself. Literature moves in the sweep of phrases, in the cantino of the sentence, seldom in the staccato of the spoken word.

The second essay, Originality in Literature, calls attention to the fact that stupid things have been said for the first time. The third, The Cult of the Natural, is an elaboration of the ancient aphorism that art is artificial and appears natural. The fourth, The Cult of the Contemporary, need not detain us. The last, The Characters Proper to Literature, is a plea for characters a little better than life.

The whole forms a highly proper book to be placed on the library tables of Suburbia. There is not a false expression, not a word astray, no hint of feeling or charm disturbs the quiet flow of language. It is all eminently correct, and not a little dull.

JOHN E. LIND.

Man and Mystery in Asia

Man and Mystery in Asia, by Ferdinand Ossendowski. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

READERS of Dr. Ossendowski's sensational book of last year, Beasts, Men and Gods, could not but ask: Who is the man himself, and what preparation, what equipment had he for that terrible journey, in flight from the Bolsheviki, across the width of Asia, the account of which details adventures of almost incredible violence and variety, set down with such cool precision, brevity and naïveté? The present book explains. Chronologically it antedates the other—in parts by twenty years; it is a sort of post-introduction, as one may say, to the great Odyssey. In his younger days, Ossendowski, a chemist with an eye out for the natural resources of an unexploited continent, had joined a scientific expedition to study the salt lakes beyond the Yenesei; and some years later he was given a government commission to inspect the mineral wealth of the country north of Vladivostok. Hence his readiness with languages, his knowledge of manners and customs, and his aptitude for dealing with his beasts, his men, and his gods. These, in the end—if we set aside the author's prowess as a hunter—were all men together: at one extremity of the scale the bête humaine, whether escaped from control or never fully tamed by it; at the other extremity, the Living Buddha of Urga, and the Pandita Hutuktu, a "living god" devoted to European clothing, electric lights, wine and card-playing; in between, the multiplicity of Mongol tribes, harried by demons and sorcerers and pressed alike by Russia and China, together with a miscellany of desperate refugees who were seeking to establish order where order had utterly failed, or who were fighting their way through toward safety—over a wide continent wherein security was almost non-existent—under another and better régime.

The present book maintains the interest of its predecessor. It lacks the simple, massive unity of the other, being the record of four minor journeys instead of a single major one; but in topical variety it is even superior. If one may say with reason, "always something new out of Africa," one may say with double reason, under such guidance as Ossendowski's, "always something new out of Asia." We open ourselves in widest receptivity, and we set aside all

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criteria. The aberrations of the Asiatic nature seem endless, and the vagaries of Asiatic humanity inexhaustible. Our own western "wonderland" almost irons out to plain prose, and the excesses of our Wild West, even in its freest days, range themselves within an ordered domesticity. If we, in our city jungle, have failed to realize, despite the ministrations of a daily press, what the human animal may be and do and suffer, we shall be able to learn it from the course of things in the remotest and savagest East. Little wonder that our traveler and adventurer should declare that the best of educations is an out-of-door-education—one which develops morale and which enables a man to maintain himself against an unfriendly nature and, inferentially, against inimical humankind.

The book, like its mate, exhibits everywhere the composure, "virtu" and concision of a man who has gone through much; where wonders and horrors are so many, no particular one need be selected for treatment with emphasis and verbosity. The Slavic provenance of both books is manifest in the taste for the mysterious and the mystical: here and there we are turned toward visions and premonitions, clairvoyance, hypnosis and hallucinations. The same racial bent may be perceived, now and again, in traces left at once by the altruist and the pessimist. When, after an interval of twenty years, our author revisits certain localities in Western Siberia, to find the ruins of industrial establishments and of workmen's homes, and to come across the bodies of Tartars and their herds slain by the Bolsheviki, he cries out: "Where are you, my young days? Where are the thoughts and ideals of my youth?" Was it this, he asks, that he expected from life and civilization when wandering here years before, while working for the progress and happiness of humanity and hoping to give a better destiny to this boundless and promising land?

In Eastern Siberia he is equally shocked by the criminal activity of the Russian merchants among the Mongolian tribes. Alcohol is the first preliminary to barter. Drunken stupor follows vodka. Fires go out and whole camps freeze. In fact, Russian traders, working eastward across Siberia, have shown even less conscience toward the Mongol nomads than American traders, working westward from the Mississippi, have shown toward our Indians. Still more dreadful the experiences of the "White Swans," those wretched Koreans who have ventured northward into the Ussurian forests; and utterly hideous the account of the convicts on Sakhalin—before they were amnestied to share in the new governmental order under the Soviets.

Man and Mystery in Asia is studied with brief set-pieces of narrative which have all the shape and force of "short stories from the Russian." In compactness, in intensity, in grim horror and sometimes in quaint humor, and in the light they throw on the psyche of the Slav, they come within hail of the work of the best Russian fictionists. One may note, as conspicuous, the chapter on The Avenger of Onor. This person was a religious zealot who had gone to Sakhalin to work among the convicts. After his young son had been murdered by some of the very men among whom he had preached, he settled down on the mainland to capture and destroy other convicts as they escaped. Some years later this same man became the terror of Western Siberia, bringing havoc and slaughter among the Bolshevik commissars, who had been prisoners on the other side of the continent. The author, by a singular coincidence and regardless of the difficulties of time and space, met and talked with this "avenger" at both extremes of Asia. Another of the narratives, which also seems too well shaped, deals with the sect of suicides on the slopes of the Altai Mountains. All the elements are present: the holy man who has imposed himself; the credulous peasants ready, when suitably worked on, to slit their own throats; the hesitating wife of the engineer, on the edge of conversion—and of carnality; the determined husband prowling through the forest with his rifle; finally, the author himself, stumbling through thickets and peatbogs, so as to keep the sequence of events under observation. It is in such instances as these—and these only—that credulity slightly falters. A tale may be too well turned out, too symmetrical, too conclusive. It may lead to the surmise that, after a certain amount of practice with the pen, the author, full as he is of first-hand knowledge of unique and vastly important things, may have mistakenly sunk, now and then, to the level of what has been termed, disparagingly, "mere literature." Dr. Ossendowski is the last man in the world who needs to do this, and one prefers to hope that he has not done it.

For the catalogue of his marvels and hazards is unending. Long coincidence and high precision may well be among them. The climatic and the vicissitudinous assuredly are. One curious impression comes after an hour spent with the Tartar herders of the steppes. It sometimes comes, too, when one dwells upon other and more developed phases of the life Asiatic, where chiefly personal force and dexterity keep a man a "going concern." It recurs when ambitious but over-administered Egyptians, for example, complain of the curtailments suffered by native ability: the carrière—though possibly one of chicane and cruelty—is no longer ouverte aux talents. Is not our sheltered and ordered western life, after all, possibly but a complicated deviation from the normal—a confounding of the passing and incidental with that which is permanent and fundamental? To the Occidental who feels thus, Asia, with her long chances and her stark realities, beckons; and Ossendowski remains, thus far, the chief exponent of her varied yet equivocal opportunities.

HENRY B. FULLER.

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